

# THE MONTH

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## EDITORIAL COMMENTS

### The Far East

THE past three months have brought us disaster after disaster in the Far East. Some of these were anticipated, e.g. the capture of Hongkong. For others excuses can be found, though only up to a certain point. The French had opened a way for the Japanese in Indo-China. The surprise attack upon the American fleet in Pearl Harbour had given the Japanese a temporary superiority at sea—a superiority that was heavily confirmed by the sinking of the *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse*. These excuses, however, can be no more than partial. It was in September 1940 that the French authorities transferred sea and air bases in Indo-China to Japan. We had had more than a year to re-adapt our defence plans for Malaya and to convert Singapore into something more than an island strongly fortified against attack from the sea. There was culpable negligence at Pearl Harbour. And the despatch of the two British battleships to Far Eastern waters, without adequate destroyer protection and with scarcely any air support, was always a risky, and proved to be a fatal, move. The retreat through Malaya, the Singapore surrender, the inability—with the Dutch—to hold Java—all this has made sorry reading and will make gloomy history. It is not, of course, surprising that we were outnumbered and were unable to face the Japanese air forces on equal terms. This was probably inevitable, given the need of re-arming the British troops in 1940, of equipping the divisions of the Middle East in 1940 and 1941, and of sending tanks and planes to Russia in 1941 and 1942. What was alarming was the speed with which the Japanese penetrated our positions, turning flanks and appearing in the rear with bewildering ease. Our troops were not quite ready for the tricks and stratagems of this new enemy. The story of the surrender of Singapore has not yet been told, and it is doubtful whether it will be fully told for some time to come. There was gallantry, there was heroism, but the island which had been termed impregnable

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was soon captured. The loss of over 90,000 British, Australian, and Indian troops in Singapore was one of the greatest material defeats in a long British history.

### Far Eastern Consequences

THE consequences of these British, Dutch, and American defeats in the Pacific will be very serious. In the first place, the Allies have been thrown back upon India and Australia as their main centres of defence. These two defence fronts are far apart from one another and, if the Japanese can assert full control in the Southern Indian Ocean, communication between them will be extremely difficult. A probable attack upon India is developing through Burma, and the Japanese are manoeuvring for positions so as to attack Australia from New Guinea and from the sea. However, both defence fronts are being reinforced, and the day will arrive when the Americans will mount their own offensive. What form an offensive against Japan can take—with Britain and Russia so heavily engaged with Germany—it is not easy to say. With Chinese collaboration a counter-offensive might be planned through Siam, and, as soon as naval superiority is sufficiently restored, a strong attack will be made on the Japanese communication lines and even on Japan itself. Should Japan be persuaded by the Nazis to invade Siberia, there will be the further possibility of air attacks on the Japanese islands from the Asiatic mainland. We have been prudently warned to expect further bad news from the East: the situation will be worse before it is finally better. The moral consequences of these rapid Japanese victories are certain to be serious. The white man has lost prestige, and has lost it badly. The effects of this are already evident in the behaviour of the Siamese and some of the Burmese. The European's position in the East has rested largely on this special prestige. It was a desire to undermine and destroy this prestige that was one of the causes that impelled the Japanese to insult Englishmen in Shanghai before the war, and to attempt to humiliate British prisoners in Hongkong and Singapore.

### The "Croakers"

IT is a national habit, in any crisis or after a disaster, to hold inquests over the past and to indulge in rosy dreams

about the future. Such inquests have their use, though it would have been far more useful to have held them years before while there was some chance of profiting from their findings. They have their use. It was an inquest over Norway that brought Mr. Churchill to the Premiership: and an inquest over Malaya occasioned a re-casting of the Government in what appears to be a more effective mould. But an inquest of this kind may become a long wail of recrimination, serving no other purpose than to dishearten and discourage. There has been, not unnaturally, an epidemic of this *inquestitis* after the various setbacks in the Far East. Everybody was blamed since it was clear that someone should be censured. It was the fault of the War Office or the General Staff or the Malayan Civil Service—and so on, and so on. We had not troubled to enlist the sympathies and the loyalty of the native Malayans, etc., etc. On the general maxim of "no smoke without fire" there is probably some truth in all these criticisms. The trouble is not only that our forces in these different battle places were "too little and too late." Most of our criticism is too late as well. The House of Commons performs one most valuable function in war-time, that of full and fearless criticism of the Government—a factor that plays no part at all in any of the three enemy administrations. Such criticism is "democratic" in the genuine sense; it protects the individual from unjustified Government interference, and ensures that the members of the Government remain conscious of their responsibility before the people. But captious, silly, ignorant criticism is out of place. There may have been room for trifling in Parliamentary debates in times of peace: there is neither call nor justification for it under the serious stress of war. When one reads the day-to-day reports of recent debates, one is made aware that such trifling has not altogether gone. "Grousing" used to be called—and possibly is still called—the British soldier's privilege. "Croaking" and "wailing" are no privilege: they are merely a pest.

### Rosy Dreams

FROM inquests over the past to the future's rosy dreams! One school of thought argues that we should concentrate all our energies upon the one task of winning the war, and that it will be sufficient to tackle post-war problems when we shall

have reached a post-war condition. We sympathize with the argument, but cannot entirely agree. Unless we make ourselves conscious of the great and sustained effort that will certainly be demanded of us after the war, we may then succumb to the *lassitude* and *laissez-aller* which we manage to overcome and control under stress of actual warfare. It is not enough to look ahead to months, perhaps years, of effort and sacrifice before the war is won. We must face the stern fact that, if decent and orderly conditions are to be restored throughout the world, much of the burden of this restoration will fall upon the Americans and ourselves. Europe will require special handling in the immediately post-war months. Millions of half-starved and diseased persons will need abundant and continual help. There will have to be a post-armistice period (from at least one to quite possibly three years) before Europe can be stabilized politically in any adequate peace settlement. The possibility remains, even the likelihood, that war will continue in the Pacific after it has been brought to an end in Europe. Isolationism will be a strong temptation, both here and in the United States. Mr. Wendell Willkie declared, a few weeks ago, that a not inconsiderable percentage of the American people did not yet understand how seriously the United States were affected by the war. To leave Europe to its fate after this war is to start the preparations for the third world war in another quarter of a century. The Americans and ourselves are "possessor" countries with resources that should enable us to recover from the war's effects more rapidly and more healthily than many another country. This fact alone confers responsibility. If there is to be a saner system of international relations after the war—and there must be if the world is to be saved—then the establishment of that order will depend, in very large measure, upon Britain and the U.S.A. Possessions and power bring with them responsibilities. Governments, like individuals, have not sufficiently understood this principle. The pre-war report on conditions in the West Indies and recent complaints about Malaya—in so far as either is justified—show that we too have failed to achieve that full measure of responsibility. There was once much talk about the "white man's burden"; we shall have to shoulder our large share of it. It will call for discipline, unselfishness, and devotion to a cause; it will demand a very different spirit from the loose and flabby aimlessness of the between-war years.

### Spring Offensives

THE Russian attacks throughout the winter have caused the Germans considerable losses in men, if not perhaps in heavy war material. Whether this has shaken their morale is another matter. But they can scarcely have the same confidence as before that, when the great thaw is over, they will push rapidly forward to capture the big Russian cities and to overwhelm the Russian armies. The Russians have freed Moscow, have partially disentangled Leningrad and have somewhat eased the situation in the South. Smolensk remains, however, in enemy hands, and the Germans possess many strong points, deep in Soviet territory, from which to launch a renewed offensive. Vast preparations have been made during the winter on both sides, the Germans harnessing to their war effort the factories and conscript labour of the occupied countries. Russia has had to face more severe industrial problems but it appears that trans-Ural development has gone on apace and that supplies from Britain and the U.S.A., particularly the former, have been on a very large scale. The winter has permitted the training of immense numbers of Russian reserve troops. Russia's need is not of men: it is of cohesion and equipment. The German attack upon Russia will be remounted this spring or, at the very latest, early in summer. Probably its main pressure will be directed against the southern front. Oil is required, and a successful drive along the Caucasus would have the double result of cutting off the Russians' chief oil supplies and securing those oil resources of which the Germans will very shortly feel the want. This southern movement may well be accompanied by an invasion of Turkey (with the assistance of Bulgarian and Italian troops) and an attempt to force the passages to the Black Sea. Or Turkey might even be by-passed and the attack delivered against Syria and Palestine in the direction of Iraq, with a previous parachute invasion of the island of Cyprus. This second movement would have as its counterpart a renewed offensive by Rommel's African corps which has been receiving considerable reinforcements in spite of the heavy toll exacted by our Mediterranean ships. Southern Italy and the Greek islands are heavily garrisoned. There will be further activity in the Mediterranean though the Italians will be loath to risk their navy on anything more dangerous than convoy work. Poor Italy! That unfortunate country's position becomes more and more hopeless. The Germans are now in complete

control and have recently introduced the conscription of Italians for civilian and industrial purposes. It would be well to watch Hitler's naval ambitions. Large German naval units are in Norwegian fjords (perhaps because of the danger of an Allied counter-invasion) and Hitler has cast envious eyes on the Swedish fleet. The French navy still manages to elude his grasp—this much must be allowed to Vichy's credit, even to that of Darlan. The farcical outcome of the Riom trials has stiffened the German attitude towards Vichy, and the return of Laval and a definitely Nazi group of Frenchmen raises doubts and complications.

### Christian Resistance to the Nazis

ELSEWHERE in this number is an article entitled "Christians at Bay." The article points to the firm stand that has been taken against the Nazis by the Catholic Church in Belgium and Holland and by the Protestant Churches of Holland and Norway. It is significant that national resistance to the invader in the West has come to centre itself around these Christian bodies. One sees in it another proof that Nazism is thoroughly anti-Christian, in character and aims, and that this is recognized by both Catholics and Protestants alike. The Dutch and Belgian hierarchies deny the sacraments to all members of the Nazi parties that have been set up in their countries. Recent happenings in Norway have been particularly stormy. Owing to bullying measures adopted against the Bishop of Oslo and the Dean of Trondheim by the Quisling party members, the Norwegian bishops have laid down their State dignity and will continue to function merely in a spiritual capacity. The great majority of Norwegian pastors have declared that they will adopt a similar position if the Nazified regulations concerning Norwegian schools and the Quisling Youth Movement are not withdrawn. Over nine thousand of the ten thousand State school teachers have asserted their Christian support of bishops and pastors and will abandon their profession unless the schools and youth questions are dealt with in a manner satisfactory to Norwegian national feeling and Christian standards. One consequence of Nazi interference with religion—within Germany and in the occupied countries—has been a definite rapprochement between Catholics and Protestants. What is being assailed is not this or that feature of Catholicism or Protestantism: it is

Christianity root and branch which these Nazi pagans are resolved, if they can, to remove. This rapprochement in the face of a common danger has been reflected in Britain and the United States and it is not likely to remain a war-time phenomenon that will be set aside when normal conditions are restored. It is, we think, a symptom of the new age, now developing, that will appear in clearer outline under those new conditions. The rapprochement presents certain problems. That is evident. But they are understood on both sides. Even before 1939 there was far-reaching co-operation in social and public affairs between Catholics and Calvinists in Holland: and the formation of Joint Christian Councils in many English towns and districts, with the work of the Sword of the Spirit, is an indication that this spirit of rapprochement is widely welcome here.

### The Riom Trials

THE Germans' *forte* is organization: their *faible* is psychology: they rarely understand the mentality of other peoples. The Riom trials are a case in point. In Hitler's intentions these trials were to prove that Germany was not responsible for the war, and that the war guilt belonged to Britain and the French politicians in power during the thirties—who were refusing all the time Hitler's outstretched and friendly hand. It is worth remembering that one of the clauses in the Versailles Treaty which rankled most uncomfortably in the German mind was that which ascribed to Germany the guilt for the war of 1914-1918. This was a stigma which seemed to put them outside the pale of civilization. It was an affront which, whatever its truth, worried and angered them. This time they would avoid anything of the kind by staging the Riom trials and conveniently attaching the war-guilt label to some other Powers. But—alas for this fatuous thinking—the Riom Trials have turned out as every sensible individual imagined that they would. They have revealed a want of military preparedness in France, a grave decline in morale since the establishment of the Popular Front in 1936, a general disinclination for war. The evidence of various generals was illuminating though their personal experiences frequently varied. Great courage on the part of the French troops, but lack of tanks and still more of aircraft, and yet a gradual demoralization in the ranks between the summer of

1939 and May 1940—these facts were often brought forward. The generals blamed the politicians, and the politicians censured the generals: the name of Pétain was scrupulously omitted. The upshot of the Riom trials was, and is, the clear fact that France was unprepared for war and did not want war, and was forced to take up arms only by German aggression and by the German attack on Poland. Even then she did so reluctantly, conscious of her unpreparedness. What Hitler has succeeded in doing at Riom has been to prove this beyond question to the world. No wonder that he is angry, now that the trials have failed in what he imagined their purpose was to be. Were the whole situation in Vichy France a less tragic and sombre one, one might find much that is amusing and entertaining in these trials. But sympathy with the French people, who have seen themselves compelled to submit to this farcical indignity, stands in the way.

#### Danube and Balkans

**H**ITLER'S smaller allies appear to be marching out of step. The recent anti-Hungarian outburst of Michel Antonescu, brother of the General and himself Rumanian Foreign Minister, came at an awkward moment for the Germans who were trying to secure as many additional troops as possible for their spring and summer offensives. The Rumanians have suffered heavy losses in Southern Russia, especially before Odessa and in the Crimea. In Rumania there is little enthusiasm for Hitler's war. True, they have re-occupied the provinces of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina with German assistance: but it will not take the Russians many weeks to recover these when the time arrives. And to offset this territorial advantage, they have been compelled to cede to Hungary a large portion of Transylvania. This was the consequence of the Vienna award of a year back, and the substance of Antonescu's bitter complaint of some weeks ago. The Rumanians are anti-Russian, up to a point, but they are at the same time on uneasy terms with their Hungarian and Bulgarian neighbours. Both have claims against them, and they, in their turn, have claims on Hungary. Of the smaller countries attached to the Nazi war machine, it is probable that the Hungarians have the greatest sympathy with Hitler's aims. They had good relations with the Germans before 1914 (this was partly anti-Austrian policy), and they fought together

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Hungaria irredenta—or so they think—under Austrian, Rumanian, and Jugoslavian rule. Hungary has visions of herself as the principal Danube Power, and has been very much worried by the recent Polish-Czech and Greek-Jugoslav agreements which have been signed in London. In the event of an Allied victory Hungary sees herself left to the none-too-tender mercies of these neighbouring Powers: and there would be an end to her dreams, if not to her independence. Naturally this situation is cunningly exploited by Nazi propaganda in order to bind Hungary more tightly to the Axis. But for all this, Hungary has not become National-Socialist. The system remains parliamentarian, and the extremist parties have less than 12 per cent. of the seats in Parliament. Bardossy, the Prime Minister who recently resigned in favour of Nicolas Kallay and who was himself not unsympathetic with German ideas, declared more than once, and with distinct emphasis, that Hungary had not the least intention of abandoning the institutions which have marked her development for a thousand years. Hungary considers herself a Christian State—with something like 65 per cent. of her population Catholic. Cardinal Seredi and other distinguished Hungarians, both clerical and lay, have denounced the measures of anti-Semitism which have been proposed and, in part, introduced. The Bulgars are not at war with anybody, unless it be the Greeks. But the sad fact must not be forgotten that they have behaved towards the Greeks with abominable savagery. Next to the Germans, they have shown themselves the worst torturers and butchers in the Balkans: and neither the Jugoslavs nor the Greeks are likely to forget this fact. Like most of the Balkan peoples, the Bulgars have large territorial ambitions which they are hardly likely to realize—except on a German-controlled continent. But hitherto they have succeeded in keeping themselves free from the Russian war. The Bulgars are pro-Russian and even pro-Bolshevik: there would be considerable danger for any Bulgar Government that sanctioned an attack on Russia. Hitler has been flattering and frightening them, alternately, but hitherto with no very certain results. They

would join in an invasion of Turkey: and this is probably Hitler's intention for them. To complete the picture of the Balkan peninsula—the Jugoslavs are still resisting gallantly and with many local successes. Murder and terrorism stalk across Croatia. Greece, with the possible exception of Poland, is the country that suffers the most appallingly at the present time. Thousands have died of sheer starvation in Athens and the Piraeus: and the future of the whole Greek populace is seriously threatened.

### Problems of Propaganda

**L**ATELY there has been considerable discussion, in Parliament and elsewhere, on British propaganda to other countries. Critics have complained that it is ill-directed and inconsistent, and there is some substance to the charge. But propaganda is no simple business. Ideally speaking, it should be the presentation of the truth in a manner calculated to appeal to the particular audience you are addressing. From the Christian point of view, of course, all propaganda in favour of an unjust cause is co-operation in that evil and is therefore forbidden. Much propaganda is inevitably counter-propaganda—the rebuttal of enemy charges, the exposure of enemy lies. Here you can follow no special line: you are on the defensive, you have to wait, to listen, and to reply. Other propaganda is negative: it is concerned—in the present case—with revealing the evils of Nazism. This again depends upon events and circumstances, on the particular facet of Nazi villainy that is most conspicuous at any given moment. Positive propaganda is far from easy. To declare what you are fighting for (rather than against), what are your war aims, what you propose to realize in a post-war world—this would be positive propaganda and the very best propaganda, could you but attempt it. But it is precisely here that guidance is necessary: and one has the feeling that such guidance has not been, and will not readily be, given. Parliamentary critics have demanded a more definite—and presumably a more positive—propaganda line. Could this be given—and guided by the points of the Papal Allocutions and the Atlantic Charter—it would mark a distinct advance. Meanwhile, two remarks can be made. The first is that far greater account should be made, in British propaganda, of the moral and spiritual issues of the war. We are fighting against a very evil thing. It is

not a question of our own national merits, but we are in fact upholding certain standards—a certain freedom, for individual and nation, respect for agreements and international law, and so on—without the acceptance of which no social or international order can be reconciled with Christian principles. We are on the right, the moral side: if you want to be cynical, you may add “in spite of ourselves.” But this matters far less than the fact that we are on the side that is right and that is defending moral values against frankly immoral and devilish conceptions. Very well. Why not explain and develop this? The second point is that a far more serious appeal ought to be made to those elements in European countries that are decently conservative, for such elements will have a large part to play in restoring Europe to a sounder condition after the war. There has been a marked Left-wing influence in our propaganda to certain countries. Yet the ordinary European knows that England's traditions are deep-rooted and conservative, and that Left-wing social and political talk does not adequately reflect them. If continental countries look to England, this is certainly not because of English “pinkism” of the past twenty years. Particularly unfortunate is this kind of approach to Latin countries where the cultural and popular background is strongly coloured with Catholicism. One of the first requirements for successful propaganda is a thorough understanding of the people you are addressing. Here perhaps has been our most glaring defect.

### The Approach to South America

THE one large reasonably neutral—or at least not very belligerent—area of the world is South America. Relations with the Axis have been broken off by almost all the South American Powers. That is true. But they are not really “in the war” and are still susceptible to propaganda from either side. It is here therefore that British propaganda needs to be alive to the actual situation. South American countries differ widely in their Governments, so widely that it is unwise to talk of “democracy” without careful explanation. In Latin countries democracy is not a magic word since most of them have had unfortunate experiences with it. And it must be remembered that, although there is such a thing as a Pan-American consciousness, there still lingers a certain distrust of the commercialism and money policy of the United States. Naturally Britain is associated with the U.S.A. as

Protestant in religion, English of speech, and commercial and materialist in general outlook. A recent number of the *Commonweal* contained a warning against the danger of Axis propaganda in South American countries. This came, the paper urged, not so much from any direct Nazi or even Fascist approach as from the activity of the Spanish Falange. South America is Spanish or Portuguese in tradition and culture as it is Catholic in its religious background. The Falange stands out as the one element in present-day Spain that is decidedly pro-Axis. Most of the South American States were in favour of General Franco and the Nationalists during the Spanish civil war with the result that an appeal to them from the Falange on behalf of Germany and Italy finds them, in a sense, favourable listeners. It is important that our propaganda should make them understand what are the moral and spiritual issues of the war and that Nazi Germany represents new and horrible things that are completely out of keeping with their tradition and beliefs. Countries in which Catholic traditions are strong cannot have real sympathy with Nazism, once they understand what it is and involves. Spain and Italy are not exceptions. Outside the Falange there exists little love for Nazism, and the majority of Italians grow more and more pronouncedly opposed to that partner to which they have been committed by their ill-advised and greedy leaders.

#### An Appeal to Ourselves

**S**IMILAR criticism has been levelled against the Government for not having given a more rousing lead to the British people. Sir William Beveridge called recently for a crusading spirit. Yet comparisons between the fanatical spirit that is supposed to exist in Germany and the calmer, and still dogged, mood of the British are apt to be misleading. One does not know, for example, how well this fanatical spirit has stood the test of two and a half years of war and of the campaigns in Russia. One does not know what sections of the German people—apart from the Nazified youth—were ever infected with it. Where it does exist, it is a pathological condition of mind and soul which, given serious military reverses, might bring about a very speedy collapse. And it must be remembered that this supposedly high morale, when and where it still persists, is maintained artificially by rigorous supervision and by threats and penalties which it would be

impossible to employ in a freer country. A revolutionary movement—such as is Nazism—breeds a fanaticism, a certain intensity of feeling and activity. You cannot expect—indeed, you do not want—the same intense reaction in defence of decency and freedom. What you want is something less intense, less fanatical, but steady, dogged, and determined. The morale of the British people will outlast that of the Germans because it is less feverish and more human and normal. This does not mean that there are no reasons for criticism. Unnecessary absenteeism is reported in factories. We have with us—and apparently on as large a scale as ever—the disgusting scandal of the black market. We are not yet convinced that the measures adopted to deal with it are sufficient or sufficiently driven home. Comments are frequently made upon the large proportion of alien names among those accused of black market and similar offences: this suggests that the alien question requires further examination. And though the British people know full well what they are fighting against—Nazidom in Europe (with its pathetic satellite, Fascist Italy), and the Japanese in the Far East—they are not so clear what they are fighting for. What is lacking is not courage or morale in the ordinary sense or determination to win the war: these qualities are all present. Something more spiritual is required, a clearer sense that they are upholding beliefs and values without which human life would be intolerable—beliefs and values which, though many of them do not realize it, are Christian through and through. There is much sub-conscious Christianity in this country which needs to be brought to the surface of consciousness. Christian instincts, Christian behaviour—one has evidence of them everywhere, strangely detached from that central faith of which they are the scattered heritage. Catholics have been given a definite lead by Cardinal Hinsley and the different members of the hierarchy: the Sword of the Spirit stands as a special movement to encourage and develop this spiritual attitude towards the war. Here and there, outside the Catholic Church, a similar note has been sounded. But the note needs to be sounded more loudly and more widely.

#### The Social Aspect of Religion

A FAIRLY recent number of the *Osservatore Romano* contained a leading article on "The Social Conscience of Catholics." The article was provoked by an Italian paper

which professed to be shocked at the statement of an American Catholic bishop that "to be a Catholic means to believe that religion is a social problem as well as a personal one." The Italian paper concluded with the naïve remark: "We know perfectly well that Rome can never accept these dangerous theses because Rome is infallible." In spite of the Italian journal's care for this Roman infallibility, the *Osservatore Romano* proceeded to develop the American bishop's argument. For the Italian journal and for those who think like it, religion becomes a merely personal affair, and its influence may not pass beyond the doors of sacristy and church. Social life, professional duties, the relations between various social classes, international law and relations, are not to be examined or affected by Christian teaching. It is from this anaemic Christianity that there arises that double conscience: first of all, that of the individual who respects and, as long as it causes him no serious inconvenience, puts into practice the teaching of the Church: and then, the conscience of the public man who twists and distorts that teaching and finally objects to any interference in such matters on the part of the Church. There is only one conscience, for home and abroad, for peace and war, for personal and public affairs. That is why, the *Osservatore* went on, there ought to be no Christian, and especially no intelligent Catholic worthy of the name, who "does not desire, in these days of difficulty and uncertainty, to prepare his own mind, to make his conscience finely sensitive, and to seek in the Church's teaching and the social encyclicals—classical now but never out of date—for the moral solution of many social problems:—the relation between capital and labour, labour conditions and contracts, insurances and family allowances, professional organization and working-class housing." The editorial concluded with a passage from the Christmas Eve allocution of 1941. "At the end of the war the social question will present itself in a very acute form. Our predecessors and ourselves have underlined certain principles for its solution. Whoever has belief in Christ, in His Divinity and in His law, in His work of charity and brotherhood among men, will bring valuable elements to the task of social reconstruction. Still more precious will be the help that statesmen can bring if only they show themselves ready to open the door to the Church of Christ and to make the way plain for her that she may freely devote her supernatural energy to the cause of mutual understanding and peace between the

peoples and, with true zeal and charity, may co-operate in the immense task of healing the wounds of the war."

### One Vital Problem

A SHORT time ago, a member of the Netherlands Government, Dr. Kerstens, expressed concern as well as sorrow for what he frequently read in the obituary notices of British soldiers and airmen. This was the note that they were the only sons of their parents. We recall similar death notices in French newspapers during the 1914-1918 war: so often it was *le fils unique*. "Who dies if England lives" was a soldier's gallant challenge to death. "Who wins if England dies"—this is death's stern challenge to us. The problem of the falling birth-rate is indeed a serious one, as it is for the whole of Western Europe. An interesting *Tablet* article (January 31st) pointed out that the natural increase among the non-Slav peoples of Europe was now fairly stable at about 0.5 per cent. of the total population: but in Russia the increase is stable at about 2.5 per cent. of the population—a far higher figure. This means that if present tendencies continue, the Russian Slavs will double their numbers in about thirty years. Recent Soviet statistics show that 38 per cent. of the Russian population are under 15 years of age: in England, France, and Germany the percentage of children under 15 is from 23 to 24. At the other end of the scale, only 4 per cent. of the Russians are over 65. But for France the figure is 9 per cent., for Germany 8, for England 7.5. To return to this country. The birth-rate in England and Wales has fallen from something over 35 per 1,000 in 1880 to just 15 per 1,000 in 1939. It is true that the population figure has continued to rise, but this is due to the falling death-rate—a process that cannot go on indefinitely: and, to quote from a valuable book, reviewed elsewhere in this number, this rise in population has gone hand in hand with "an ominous rise in the average age of the nation." Economic circumstances are partly responsible for this declining birth-rate: these can in time be remedied. Modern town life has a disturbing influence upon the biological vitality and fertility of a people. The town flat and labour-saving house do not encourage larger families. Selfishness is another potent factor, while the tolerance accorded to the literature and appliances of birth prevention is a social tragedy as well as a moral scandal. There have been recent warnings in *The Times*, and Mr. Charles Macbeth, secretary to the

Catholic Pharmaceutical Guild, has done yeoman work in bringing these important national facts to the notice of secular and religious Press alike. This falling birth-rate—together with the licence allowed to those who advocate it as deliberate policy—is one of the signs of a declining people. Dr. Mannix told the Australians very bluntly that it is their own crime that their country is being defended to-day by nine million instead of eighteen million people. Family allowances, concerning which there is much discussion but a fairly general agreement, are a step in the right direction, since it is the parents of large families who are most heavily penalized under the present economic system. But family allowances alone will not solve the problem: some kind of family allowance has existed in France since 1854. To put the matter on national and sociological grounds rather than on those of ethics—the country needs a greater earnestness and sense of responsibility, including a sense of responsibility to the future. These qualities have been so admirably displayed in the defence of Britain and in the achievements of Navy, Armies, and Air Force overseas. They must be brought increasingly into the ordinary civic and national life. "Who wins if England dies?"

#### An Easter Message

EASTER had already passed by when this final comment was written. It is our great festival of joy. The Alleluias return to the liturgy they had forsaken with the wintry breath of Septuagesima: the joyous notes of the Gloria cascade forth at the first Paschal Mass. Christ is risen, in very truth. The core of the apostles' preaching was that Jesus who had lived among His fellow Jews died and then rose again. It was to the Resurrection that they appealed. Christ had set it as a sign and a challenge to His enemies: and now all who listened to this Christian preaching were told they must accept it because Christ had risen from the dead. "If Christ be not risen"—St. Paul went so far as to assert—"then vain is our faith." Paul was right. The Resurrection is an integral part of the great Redemptive plan. Christ became Incarnate, died and rose from the dead. And we, to whom the merits of Christ's Passion are applied in baptism, are associated both with His Death and the Resurrection. It is our great feast of joy: joy with Christ who has now outsoared the shadows of death and evil, and joy in the effects of that Death and Resurrection *upon ourselves*.

## JAPANESE AND ENGLISH IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

“POLITENESS to the possible” is supposed to be the Japanese attitude to religion. It was certainly the Japanese attitude to strangers blown to their secluded country by typhoons long ago. The Portuguese came first on the list and enjoyed all the politeness until the first Englishman, Mr. Will Adams, arrived, also shepherded by a typhoon. That was in the year 1600, half a century after an earlier typhoon had brought St. Francis Xavier. Goodness knows where Japan would have been without typhoons. Mr. Adams, her new guest, gives an account of himself in a letter: “I am a Kentish man, borne in a towne called Gillingham, two English miles from Rochester, one mile from Chattam, where the King’s ships doe lye, and from the age of twelve yeares olde I was brought up in Limehouse neere London, being Apprentice twelve yeares to Master Nicholas Diggins, and myselfe have served for Master and Pilott in her Maiesties ships.” At the time of the Spanish Armada, William, aged twenty-four, was captain of the *Richard Duffield*, a 120-ton merchant ship which carried supplies to Drake’s fleet. Thus he learned to have a hearty English dislike for all Dons and priests. A born adventurer, he took service after the victory with the Barbary merchants for twelve years, when he saw a better opening, to “make a little experience,” in the Dutch trade with India. Accordingly in 1598 he joined as pilot-major a fleet of five ships fitted out by the Rotterdam merchants under the command of Jacob Mahu. He was to have his little experience, all right, for the voyage proved one of the most disastrous in the whole history of the sea. Of the fleet, only his ship, the *Charity*, a little barque of 160 tons carrying 110 men, got through, and that not to the Indies, but by the will of the winds to Japan. Most of the crew were by that time dead or dying, and Adams found himself left with a mere half-dozen men to face an inscrutable nation. The woollen cloth which formed a large part of their cargo obtained for them a certain consideration from the Japanese, always polite towards the possibilities, and a few months after arrival they were invited to present themselves at Yedo, the modern Tokyo, before the

new master of Japan, Tokugawa Ieyasu, fresh from his great victory at Sekigahara. With much politeness the conqueror lodged them in a prison, from which Adams quite expected they would be led out one morning and crucified. But no; the shrewd Shogun, to give him the title which he was soon to assume, recognized in the man of Kent certain valuable qualities and possibilities, and decided to see what he could do. He put him to build a ship. Adams built an excellent little ship of eighty tons, "by which meanes," says he, "I came in more favour with him, so that I came often in his presence, who from time to time gave me presents and at length a yearly stipend to live upon, much about seventy ducats by the year, with two pounds of rice a day, daily." Adams forgot one thing, an important thing to remember in dealing with the Japanese—that it is dangerous to make oneself too useful to them. He built a second ship, nearly twice as big as the first, and also gave the Shogun some tutoring in nautical science. His Mightiness was delighted. "Now being in such grace and favour," continues the simple-hearted seaman, "by reason I learned him some points of geometry and understanding of mathematicks, I please him so that what I said he would not contrary." It was grand to have a Shogun thus, as it were, in one's pocket, and Adams at first enjoyed the unusual situation. Next, he was granted an estate, "like unto a lordship in England, with eighty or ninety husbandmen that be as my slaves." He had in fact power of life and death over his retainers, and enjoyed much the same authority as a native Daimyō. But five years of this Japanese grandeur were quite enough for good Skipper Adams, who suddenly found himself longing for Kent and a sight of his wife and two children. He asked permission to go home. The Shogun was shocked at such an idea. What, lose his best shipbuilder? He would not hear of it, and "contraried" poor Adams this time very decisively. It was now, while eating out his heart in gilded captivity, that the Skipper met the Jesuits. They were mostly "Portugals," but then under the King of Spain and so distasteful to a sturdy English Protestant. Besides, the "Portugals" in general had acquired the monopoly of Japanese trade, and, owing to their Spanish connection, were at war with the Skipper's friends, the Hollanders. No, he did not like them. They, for their part, at least admired him, and described him in their letters to Europe as "a man of fine spirit." They also did him the compliment of trying hard to

make him a Catholic, without any success whatever. A Franciscan Father from the Philippines then took a hand, but with even less good results, as the following amusing letter from another sturdy English Protestant, soon to appear on the Japanese scene, relates:

A frire that would needs work miracles in these parts to the intent to convert one Mr Wm Adams an Englishman with certen other Dutchmen. . . . I say this frire promised to worke miracles to convert them to be Roman Catholicks, askinge them if they pleased to have hym remove a great tree over the water, from the top of one mountaine to another, or else if they would have hym to remove the whole mountaine it selfe, . . . or if they would have hym to walke on the water as St Peter did, in fine Mr Adams tould hym he did not beleeve he could doe either the one or the other. . . . Yet this frire would needs trie masteries and walk upon the water, and to that intent published it about the towne of Oringou soe that thousands of people came to behould and see the event. Soe the frire beinge well provided of a great peece of wood made in forme of a cross . . . sufficient to have kept up any reesonable swimmer above the water as this man was well knowne to be, and yet for all his cunning and holynesse, he had byn drowned had not a duchman called Melchar van Sanfort gon after hym with a boate and saved hym to the utter scandall of all papists and other Christians remaining amongst these pagons which made a May game of it. And on the morrow after Mr Adams went to vizet this frire, to see what he would say, and found hym sick in his bed, much discommendinge Mr Adams for his unbeleefe, for (said he) had you but beleeeved that I could have doun it I had assuredly accomplished it. But, said Mr Adams, I tould you before that I did not beleieve that you could doe it and now I have better occasion to be of the same opineon still, soe this frire got hym packinge out of this country for very shame and as it is said went to the Manillias, where the Bushop of that place put hym into prison for his rash attempt. . . .<sup>1</sup>

The Jesuits must have guessed that the Skipper was pining for his native land, because they offered to find a means of having him and his Dutch companions conveyed out of the

<sup>1</sup> "The Log-book of William Adams," ed. Purnell, London, 1916, p. 159.

country. Adams thanked them but declined, mentioning the Shogun as the objection, a very dangerous objection. The offer, it must be said, was by no means made purely out of pity for a homesick exile. The Fathers wanted the Protestant party away because they feared that they might try to influence their Japanese converts, still "tender in the Catholic faith." It was quite a reasonable fear, considering the Skipper's hardness with Bible texts for all anti-Catholic occasions, of which the Jesuits had made proof. They also dreaded his great influence with the Shogun, and there can be no doubt whatever that he took every occasion which offered to poison that intensely suspicious potentate's mind against the Spanish and Portuguese. To be just to him, he did this for reasons of trade, not of religion, except that trade *was* a religion with the roving English and Dutch of those times. To be just again, the Spaniards and to a less extent the Portuguese shared their devotion in this matter, if in no other. *Credo in Commercium* was a universal faith.

In 1605 Adams obtained permission for his Dutch captain, Quaeckernaek, and another Hollander to proceed to the Indies, where at this time their countrymen were making the settlement which grew into the city of Batavia. The Dutch had already forty ships and five thousand merchant seamen in the East. On the report of Captain Quaeckernaek, two ships were dispatched to Hirado in 1609 containing rich presents for the Shogun. The Shogun liked the presents (though his secretary, a man with the lovely name of Kozuke no Suke, known to the English, anticipating the "Wipers" tradition, as Codskin, said, "Tut, tut, his Majesty does not accept presents"), and invited the visitors to make a trading settlement at Hirado.<sup>1</sup> That was an evil day for the Jesuits and the Church in Japan. The very presents which the Dutch had offered to the Shogun were pirated stuff, taken from captured Spanish and Portuguese merchantmen. Now, in their new lair at Hirado, they would

<sup>1</sup> In Japan it is to-day and has always been almost impossible to obtain a favour or even an interview from people of any consequence, without first making them a present. The Jesuits, whose resources were very limited, found the custom a perpetual nuisance. "In addition to general expenses," wrote the Vice-provincial, Father Paez, in 1604, "our Society has other heavy ones to meet in constantly offering presents. It is a universal custom in Japan that no person of authority may be visited without bringing him a present. Even sons when they visit their fathers from another house have to abide by this custom. We are therefore obliged by this tiresome custom of the whole kingdom to give presents first and foremost to the Lord of all Japan and his principal ministers, then to not a few pagan princes whose benevolence is an absolute necessity to us. . . . If the presents are not sent at fixed times, the benevolence promptly vanishes."

be in a better position than ever to intercept Spanish ships from the Philippines and Portuguese ships from Macao. On those latter the Jesuits depended entirely for the monies and means to support themselves and their hundreds of catechists, to build and furnish their churches, to give the Shogun and Daimyōs their presents, and to succour the ever-growing number of Christians whose property had been confiscated. Naturally they protested against the concession to the Dutch, and just as naturally the Dutchmen's friend, Adams, hit back with all sorts of allegations against the Spaniards and Portuguese. The Spaniards played into his hands by foolishly taking soundings off the Japanese coast near Yedo itself, where the Shogun resided. In 1611, on the occasion of another visit and more stolen presents from the wily Hollanders, the Shogun asked Adams, who, boasted the new apostles of trade, "had obtained such favour with this monarch that no lord nor prince of the country had better," whether it was customary in Europe to permit foreigners to make soundings in the home waters of other countries. On the contrary, replied the Skipper, seizing his golden chance, to do so constituted an act of war. Probably the Spaniards had designs on the Kingdom of Japan. Their missionaries were really spies, sent to undermine the loyalty of the natives to their own rulers, in order to prepare the way for the conquest of the country by the Spaniards. For this reason the rulers of Germany, England and the Netherlands would not allow priests to enter their countries. Thus was Japanese suspiciousness and natural hatred of foreigners, sterile hitherto for want of excuses, fecundated from Kent. But the Muse of history is an ironic lady, and the Skipper's weapon against the "Portugalls" turned out afterwards to be a boomerang.

Adams at this time was playing a double game, but one which, all things considered, does him credit. He liked the Dutch and served them very well, but he wanted his own country to have its share of Japanese trade. Unable to return to England, he endeavoured by means of letters, which the unsuspecting Hollanders conveyed for him, to bring England out to Japan. As a consequence, the first English ship, the *Clove* (Captain John Saris), berthed at Hirado in 1613. One of the Skipper's letters from Japan is famous and rather touching. In it he says:

In the end of five yeeres, I made supplication to the King to goe out of this land, desiring to see my poore wife

and children according to conscience and nature. With the which request the Emperour was not well pleased, and would not let me goe any more for my countrey, but to byde in his land. Yet in process of time, being in great favour with the Emperour, I made supplication again, by reason we had news that the Hollanders were in Shian (Siam); which rejoiced us much with hope that God should bringe us to our countrey againe, by one meanes or other. So I made supplication again, and boldly spake myselfe with hym, at which he gave me no answer. I told hym if he would permit me to depart, I would be a meanes that both the English and the Hollanders should come and traffick there. But by no meanes he would let mee goe. I asked him leave for the Capten, the which he presently granted mee. . . . Therefore I do pray and intreate you in the name of Jesus Christ to doe so much as to make my being here in *Japon* knownen to my poor wife, in a manner a widow, and my two children fatherlesse; which thing only is my greatest grieve of heart and conscience. . . . There bee many Jesuites and Franciscan friars in this land, and they have converted many to be Christians, and have many churches in the land. . . .<sup>1</sup>

It may be some relief to the feelings of the kind-hearted reader to learn that the Skipper consoled himself, sailor-fashion, for the loss of Mrs. Adams by setting up house with a Japanese lady named Kageyu, who gave him two children, Joseph and Susannah, in place of his English ones, and made him very comfortable on his fine estate near Yokosuka until the end of his days.

The arrival of the English ship at Hirado led to the formation of a Japanese branch of John Company, with Adams on its board and a delightful person, Richard Cocks, grocer, of Coventry, at its head. As Protestant nations, the English and Dutch might stand together against the Catholic Portuguese and Spaniards, but when it came to trade it was a case of every nation for itself and bankruptcy take the hindmost. On their visit to the Shogun, the Englishmen ran into Captain Hendrik Brouwer, head of the Dutch factory or trading-station at Hirado. He cut them dead. "Captain Brouwer," says Cocks, "went along by the doore but would not look at us and

<sup>1</sup> Rundall, "Memorials of Japan" (Hakluyt Society), 1850, p. 17. The story has a fictional parallel in Captain Evelyn Waugh's "A Handful of Dust," but is stranger than the fiction.

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we made as little account of him." Adams's relations with the Dutch constantly irritated Cocks. "I cannot choose but note it down," writes the grocer, "that both I myself and all the rest of our nation doe see that he is much more friend to the Dutch than to the Englishmen, which are his own contrey-men, God forgie him." The Dutch undercut the English in the Japanese market, which was bad enough, but when they actually sold *English* cloth at a cheaper price than Cocks and his Company could afford to do, it was too bad. "The devell hawle some of them for theire paines," wrote Captain Ralph Copendall indignantly.

Towards the end of the year 1614 Cocks reported the outbreak of the Great Persecution of the Christians to his employers in London: "The Emperour of Japan hath banished all Jesuistes, pristes, friers and nuns (there were not any to banish) out of all his domynions." But he soon found that the Jesuistes had by no means all allowed themselves to be transported, and lets us see at once his own prejudice and natural kindness of heart:

I thought good to note downe that a padre or Jesuit came to the English howse and said his name was Tomas and a Bisken (Biscayan) by nation, and gave it out he was a merchant; and others gave hym the name of Captain. Yet I knew what he was, having seen hym in this howse before, etc. He beged a littel allowaies (aloes) of me which I gave hym, as I did the like when he was here before. For you must understand that these padres have all the gifte of beging, and allwais answer: "Sea por l'amor dios." This is a generall note to know them by, for they cannot so counterfeit but that word will still be thrust out. This padre, Tomas or Capt. tould me that they stood in dowbt that the King of Shashma (the Daimyô of Satsuma) would destroy Langasaque (Nagasaki) . . . but I believe it not.<sup>1</sup>

Cocks might have won a smile from the Shogun, which he and his company badly needed, by betraying poor Father Tomas, but to his great credit such a thought never entered his head. Another whom he assisted, and whose prayers we may trust assisted him, was the dazzlingly heroic Franciscan martyr, Blessed Apollinaris Franco, later to end his selfless days at the stake in Omura. In 1615 a rebellion had broken out in favour

<sup>1</sup> "The Diary of Richard Cocks," ed. Murakami, Tokyo, 1899, p. 3. Cocks's spelling has a wonderful and at times even startling variety.

of Hideyori, son of the previous master of Japan, Taico-Sama, on whose shoulders Ieyasu himself had climbed to power. A sanguinary battle at Osaka decided the issue in the Shogun's favour. Father Franco and some Jesuits were witnesses of the subsequent slaughter in which much Christian blood was shed, and barely escaped with their own lives. "After dyner," writes Cocks in his "Diary" for June 7th, 1615, "came a Franciscan frire called Padre Appolonario, whom I had seen 2 or 3 times in Firando (Hirado) heretofore. He was in the fortres of Osekey when it was taken, and yet had the good happ to escape. He tould me he brought nothing away with hym but the clothes on his back, the action was soe sudden. . . . He desired me for God's sake to geve hym somthing to eate, for that he had passed much misery in the space of 15 daies, since he departed out of the fortres of Osekey. So, after he had eaten, I gave hym 15 mas (about 8s.) in plate; and so he departed."

Ieyasu died in 1616 and was succeeded by his son Hidetada, to whose court at Yedo Cocks repaired, armed with a rich present, in order to secure the renewal of the Company's privileges. A shock awaited him, as he explains in the following letter:

Once I thought we should have lost all our privilegeses, for the Councell sent to us I think about twenty tymes to know whether the English nation were Christians or no. I answered we were and that they knew that before by our Kinges Maties. letter sent to the Emperour his father (and hym selfe), wherein it apeared he was defender of the Christian faith. "But," said they, "are not the Jesuists and fryers Christians two?" Unto which I answered they were, but not such as we were, for that all Jesuists and fryers were banished out of England before I was borne, the English nation not houlding with the pope nor his doctryne, whose followers these padres (as they cald them) weare. It is strange to see how often they sent to me about this matter, and in the end gave us waynyng that we did not comunecate, confesse, nor baptiz with them, for then they should hold us to be all of one sect. Unto which I replied that their Honours needed not to stand in dowbt of any such matter, for that was not the custom of our nation.

When he had found a *boz* or bonze to translate the Japanese

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text of the privileges for him, Cocks learned with disgust that the English Company must in future confine its trading operations entirely to Hirado, which was "but a fisher towne, having no marchantes dwelling in it." He therefore returned to Yedo to plead an extension, but without success. At Yedo there was a Spanish captain who gave out that the Dutch and English had taken and robbed all the Chinese junks coming to Japan. This allegation, which was very largely true, infuriated Cocks, though he knew well that it was very largely true. He tells the revenge which he took:

I enformed the two secretaries, Oyen Dono and Cod-squin Dono, that yf they lookt out well about these two Spanish shippes arived in Xaxma (another variant of that much-abused seaport Satsuma) full of men and treasure, they would find that they were sent of purpose by the King of Spaine, haveing knowledg of the death of the ould Emperour, thinking some papisticall *tono* (Daimyô) might rise and rebell and so draw all the papistes to flock to them and take part, by which meanes they might on a sudden seaz upon som strong place and keepe it till more succors came, they not wanting money nor men for thackomplishing such a strattagim. Which speeches of mine wrought so far that the Emperour sent to stay them, and had not the great shipp cut her cable so to escape, she had been arrested. . . . So in this sort I cried quittance with the Spaniardes. . . . Also may it please your Worships that at our being at themperours court, the amerall of the sea was very ernest with Mr. Wm. Adames to have byn pilot of a voyage they pretended to the northward to make conquest of certen islands, as he said, rich in gould. Yet I tould the amerall to the contrary, and tould hym that my opinion was he might doe better to put it into the Emperours mynd to make a conquest of the Manillias (the Philippines) and drive those small crew of Spaniardes from thence, it being so neare unto Japon. . . . He was not unwilling to listen heareunto, and said he would comunecate the matter to the Emperour. And out of dowbt yt would be an easy matter for the Emperour to doe it, yf he take it in hand. . . .<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Diary of William Cocks," vol. 11, pp. 280-1. The letter, dated January 1st, 1616, was to the East India Company. At the end there is a loud wail about "the presentes contynewly given, it being the fation of the contrey, or else there is no staying for us." So the Jesuits were not the only ones to feel the burden.

Cocks did not mean such harm, but the result of his specious lies was an intensification of the measures against the Catholic missionaries and their converts. During the following years, tens of thousands of men, women and children were done to death with every refinement of sadistic cruelty because they would not deny their faith. A curious detachment marks Cocks's frequent references to their sufferings, sadly in contrast with the sympathetic notices of the Dutch Calvinist observers. Adams likewise bemoaned nothing in the persecution except that it was a hindrance to trade. "All our trouble is wholly to be imputed to the popists," he said. Neither man seemed to have the least scruple that their own wicked, unfounded allegations might be the principal cause, as the Jesuits believed, of the disaster befallen Christianity in Japan. Referring to Nagasaki, shortly before an entirely Christian town, Cocks writes: "A papist Portingale bushopp (Luis Serqueyra, S.J.) lived in the towne and there was 10 or 12 parish churches, besides monasteries, all which are now pulld downe to the grownd this yeare; and the places where all such churches and monasteries weare, with the church-yards, are all turned into streets, and all the dead mens boanes taken out of the grownd and cast forth for their friends and parentes to bury them where they please. I doe not rejoice herein, but wish all Japon were Christians; yet in the tyme of that bushopp, heare were so many prists and Jesuistes with their partakers, that one could not passe the streetes without being by them called Lutranos and herejos, which now we are very quiet and none of them dare open his mouth to speak such a word. And soe, beseeching the God of Heaven to blesse and prosper your Worships in all your proeceedings, I humbly take my leave." Cocks seems to make too much of a song about a few little Japanese boys shouting "heretic!" after him in the street. He might have remembered what he wrote himself to his "loving fren" Mr. Osterwick: "As the saying is, *nemo sine crimene vivet*. You must pardon me yf I speak falce Latten."

To the genuine grief of Mr. Cocks, Skipper Adams died in 1619 without having discovered that North-West Passage on which he had set his heart. According to Griffis in his "Mikado's Empire," published in 1876, there were living at that date Japanese who claimed descent from the stout old Elizabethan. He was buried on a hill overlooking the Bay of Tokyo, and in the City itself a street was named in memory

of him *Anjin Cho*, or Pilot Street. As late as 1873 Griffis attended there a festival held in his honour. But poor Will Adams of Kent must have turned right over in his Japanese grave recently, and poor Dick Cocks, who has no grave, for he was buried at sea, would not now be so happy that the "Emperour" had at long last decided to follow his suggestion of making a conquest of the Philippines.

Though both Adams and Cocks showed kindness to individual priests in their time of tribulation, they quite forgot how to be kind when the sacred interests of trade became involved. After many bickerings and a period of open war, the English and Dutch in Japan had entered into an uneasy sort of alliance in 1620. Their plight as traders was daily becoming more desperate, for the Japanese, pondering on their tales against the Spaniards and Portuguese, had put two and two together and decided that all foreigners were much of a muchness. Moreover, native merchants had formed what would now be called a ring to put a stop to their sales. In these circumstances, brought about by their own folly, the English and Dutch took to piracy as a compensation. The English ship, *Elizabeth*, cruising off Formosa in 1620, seized a Japanese vessel trading between the Philippines and Japan. To their great relief and satisfaction, the pirates discovered two priests on board, for if they could convict them of being priests, the ship, by recent Japanese law, would become their prize. The Fathers, Pedro de Zuniga, an Augustinian, and Luis Flores, a Dominican, were dressed as merchants, and, in order to save the lives of the Japanese captain and crew, stoutly maintained that such was their profession. They were both old heroes of the Japanese mission, returning to that grim battlefield. Cocks, who had guessed them to be priests by their very demeanour, now appears in an abominable light. He had the two men thrown shackled and half-naked into a narrow dungeon, where they were left starved and covered with vermin for fifteen days, while he stumped about doing all in his power to secure witnesses against them. He spent a great deal of money in the process, and even went the long way to Yedo to put his case before the Shogun, though he knew perfectly well what would happen to the priests and the Japanese sailors if he succeeded. It makes it look all the blacker that against him were working to save the priests the pagan Daimyô of Hirado and the pagan governor of Nagasaki. He only half succeeded. The Shogun with grim humour

appropriated the disputed cargo for himself, and caused the two Fathers and the Japanese captain, Joachim Firaama, a devout Catholic and member of the Confraternity of the Rosary, to be slowly roasted to death at Nagasaki on August 19th, 1622. That same day the entire crew of Japanese, who likewise were all Catholics and members of the Confraternity, suffered death by decapitation. Priests and sailors alike, all were beatified by Pius IX. Cocks and his friends witnessed their martyrdom. Poor fellow, he raged at the loss of his prize for which all this innocent blood had been sacrificed, and declared the Shogun's treatment of him to be "truly the greatest wrong or indignity that eaver hitherto was offered to any Christians," attributing it to the influence of the Daimyô of Hirado, "whose mother is a papisticall Jesuit and he and the rest of his bretheren and sisters papisticall Christians."

As their trading venture in Japan had proved a costly failure, the governors of the East India Company at Batavia ordered Cocks to close down its affairs and return to England in 1623. He departed a disgraced man, and, perhaps luckily for himself, died on the voyage home. The "Diary" is full of interesting and often very amusing details of the Japanese scene, but his description of the wonders of the country King James I declared to be "the loudest lies that ever I have heard." Maybe that royal judgment applies most of all to the first letter quoted in this article about the friar who planned to convert Mr. Adams by emulating St. Peter. The most interesting sentence in the letters from a literary point of view occurs in one dated October 1st, 1617: "We are put to Hodgson's choice to take such previlegese as they will geve us, or else goe without." Thomas Hobson, the Cambridge-London carrier, whose refusal to allow any of his horses to be used except in strict rotation is supposed to have given rise to the proverb of "Hobson's Choice," was a contemporary of Cocks, his life covering the period 1544-1630. Now Cocks lived abroad from the turn of the century until his death in 1623, and it is in the highest degree unlikely that the expression could have become common usage before his departure from England, as it is that he should have picked it up in foreign parts. His use of the spelling "Hodgson" proves nothing, because, like most Elizabethans, he spelt, not by rule, but as the fancy took him. The conclusion, then, would seem to be that the saying ante-dates Cambridge Hobson, who must regretfully be deprived of his one title to immortality.

In 1673, during the time of Charles II and his Portuguese Queen, Catherine of Braganza, the English made another bid for Japanese trade. But when the good ship *Return* arrived at Nagasaki that year, she was expected, for the Dutch at Batavia, then at war with England, had taken care to warn the Japanese and tell them about Catherine of Braganza. The first thing the visitors found themselves ordered to do was to haul down their colours because they bore the Cross of St. George. The Cross must not fly in Japanese waters. Then, when the ship had been disarmed and hostages taken from it, captain and crew were closely questioned by minions of the reigning Shogun. "They inquired of me," says the Captain, Simon Delboe, in his "Diary," "concerning the Portugal religion, whether they were not called *Catholico Romano* . . . had not a woman image, or print, called *Sta. Maria*, and a man *Sto. Christo*, and whether they had not their images in reverence? and what other saints they had? I said I had heard they had images of these two which they worshipped, but how many others I knew not, as not being of their religion: they asked what religion we had? I told them the reformed religion. . . . They asking whether we had any images as the *Portugals* had, I told them we had none. They asked who that St. *Christo* was? . . . Who was *Sancta Maria*? . . ." So the long, detailed interrogatory went on, all going to prove how thoroughly well the old missionaries had instructed their converts and how thoroughly determined the Japanese Government was that there should be no such instruction again. The *Return* was ordered away, and strictly enjoined never to return. "We took our leaves," says Captain Delboe, "and God be praised got out of their clutches, to our great joy and content."

JAMES BRODRICK.

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#### EDITORIAL NOTE

All contributions submitted to the Editor must be typed and be accompanied by a sufficiently large stamped addressed envelope—stamps (or Post Office coupons from abroad) alone will not suffice. Articles so submitted should be concerned with matters of general interest, and be the fruit of expert knowledge or original research. They should not ordinarily exceed 3,500 words, and must be intended for exclusive publication in the "Month," if accepted.

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## RELIGION AND THE HEROIC NOTE

FOR nearly three years, on land and sea and in the air, **F**human nature in the ranks has disclosed the possibilities of will-power and endurance. Active courage has been surpassed at home by passive. Moral courage has often surpassed physical. Actually the mental suffering caused by disclosures of democracy's naked unpreparedness, first in the West and now in the Far East, has called for a special kind and degree of fortitude—the hardest of all.

Who will arise to tell adequately of all this? Is there a poet or historian among us equipped for the epic at the fit time? Or will it be left to a speech of occasion by Mr. Churchill, who seems the only man of politics, letters, and war with a sense of the glory of words, among all our public names? And, remember, he is not one of the "newest" generation, but is of the vintages of South Africa, Egypt, and the last war, with all his dynamic youth and decision.

Something chill in the air of the last twenty-five years (a slack quarter of a century) has frostbitten the lyrical and enthusiastic. The heroic note is by many perversely confounded with "heroics," and glory with vain-glory. If we are moved, we mostly quote Shakespeare's "This England" and the Harfleur speech, a Wordsworth sonnet, or a passage from Burke or Tennyson. Must it stop at that? We have Alfred Noyes and Roy Campbell, in violent and healthy reaction against this pedestrianism. But is someone of the new generation ready to give us a modern Hardy's "Dynasts"? Is a young Russian now before Moscow, Taganrog, or Sevastopol ready with the germs of a new "War and Peace"? We certainly want no dismal-clever rehash of the commercialized pessimism of "All Quiet on the Western Front." At least let us not fall below the sound standard of Blunden's "Overtones of War," Hankey's "Student in Arms," and Tomlinson's "All Our Yesterdays."

People forget that it is a *moral* thing to feel deeply, and moral also to express feeling openly and nobly. It is bad for man when praise (praise of good men, praise of God) is inhibited by self-consciousness or conventionalism. The very word "celebrate," except in relation to the Mass, has come down so

far in the world, with many, that it means a mis-spent evening in a bar parlour. There is nothing to be proud of in our dumbness. In most cases, it should have been corrected at school—especially by the poetry and history lessons. Constant close contacts with Poles, Czechs, Greeks, Slavs, Norsemen, Maltese, and Dominions men should continue the cure. Before the drab “de-bunking” craze, this race was articulate enough—nay, was gifted in expression—and our forerunners did not amalgamate much Latin, Norman, and Greek with the Anglo-Saxon and Celtic merely to leave us stranded with “basic English” which would not satisfy the emotions of a Kaffir, and is only fit for wooden “tributes.” We have been more generously endowed than most with first-class poets and masters of language. There is no antithesis between brilliance in action and brilliance in expression. Rather is there a connection between them. Perhaps the best book on the last war was by the present Premier, who has *not* the hard-boiled, prison-crop style put on by some of our frustrate intelligentsia. What were Borodino or Waterloo? No more remarkable than recent events. Yet they found their Byron, De Quincey, Cressy, Napier, Tolstoi, and Erckmann-Chatrian. Our soldiers cheered when Scott’s “Marmion” arrived at the front, and Tennyson’s latest was carried into battle. Can the spirit and technique of “The Lion has Wings” be embodied in writing? What of the naval actions, and those clashes of air armadas over England in autumn, 1940? Of the superhuman storming of Keren, the drives through eastern Africa and the Libyan desert?—of the transformation of civilians into fighters of fire while bombs lifted the earth and buildings around them?

It is glorious and satisfying when the pen is at least as mighty as the sword, as it was when Dibdin made the songs for Nelson’s tars, and when Tennyson sang Wellington’s career in that great Ode, and when Campbell wrote “Hohenlinden,” “The Battle of the Baltic,” and “Ye Mariners of England.” When, as now, there is a renascence in the spirit of a nation, there should by rights be a corresponding one in its prose and verse. For while activity needs to issue in expression, the word in turn reacts favourably upon action and character. When men are behaving in the mood of Browning’s “Prospero,” it will do them all the good in the world to know and hear that militant poem. We English have the enormous good luck to possess an heroic epic more remarkable than any

since Homer's: I mean Milton's. To read "Paradise Lost" in these last war days is to encounter the strangest reminders of current war geography—Libya, Ethiopia, Moscow, the Arctic, the Caspian, the Bosphorus, Greece, Italy, Etna (in Sicily), the Euphrates, Persia, Syria, Damascus, India, and even China and its junks, "cany wagons light." For this tremendous narrative, the high-water mark of English constructive genius in poetry, is as rich in travel hints as it is in landscape, nocturne, pastoral, war, and oratory. It is like a world, containing a number of lesser encapsulated worlds. Its hero is *not* the Devil, as hasty people and smart epigrammatists have said; but Man. It is over Mansoul still that the powers of hell and heaven make war—total war. This it is which makes the completest of poems (with Dante's) far richer in *human moral* interest than "Faust," or than any poem of antiquity, more than anything by Byron, Browning, Wordsworth, or Tennyson. Someone here will checkmate with Shakespeare's work. But while there is in him a variety not in Milton, Milton has a personality, a spiritual vigour, and a towering aim which is nowhere in Shakespeare. Both mixed some earth with their gold, but Shakespeare's dross is far in excess of Milton's. And as Mark Rutherford showed by quotation, "Milton is endowed with that quality which is possessed by all great poets—the power to keep in contact with the soul of man."

We and several associated peoples have latterly been through valleys of the shadow, and to most adult minds the experience has sharpened the taste for "high seriousness" *sometimes*. That is why the best human and profound oracles in that moving collection of ideas, the Old and New Testaments, wear so well in war-time. They are tested on our pulses and our wounds. Strength is what we all want—the strong feel kinship with it, the weak hunger after it. Power, energy, will be wanted in the coming time. You can get rays of it in Dryden, Wordsworth, Browning, and Byron; their virility and courage are sanative. Strength is even a part and ingredient of morality and beauty. Burke in politics, and the Brontës in romance, possess it. Better that art should not exist than that it should only be clever, or depressing, or perplexing. It should help us to live fully, or it is nothing. Not long ago the Under-Secretary for Air stimulated us with the hope that post-war Britain will not, as in 1919 onward, be the playground for economists, political placemen, pleasure-hunters, and defeatists, but will be of more generous, heroic texture. That

is, the hundreds of thousands of those who have bravely served as soldiers, airmen, and sailors must give our society its bent and colour. And certainly some of the healthiest things uttered since 1939 have been by Wavell, Auchinleck, Dobbie of Malta, Gort, or Admirals Cunningham and Somerville—even on social matters. It is the sedentary intellectuals, with their peevish blueprints of the future, who fail us. And never was a truer word spoken than by Major Linklater, that we English—unlike Scots, Irish, and unlike most of our allies and enemies—have not instilled pride of morale into our Armies as we do into Navy and Air Force; for which we are suffering. It had, as all know, an origin in snobbery, and is tragically shortsighted. The ignorant guying of thoughtful military advisers as “Colonel Blimp” was a mark of the “disgrace abounding” of the decadent period 1920–1938. Upon all that degeneracy we must turn our backs with contempt. A second return to that Slough of Despond—and worse—would see no exit for us.

The heroic note: why, there were dreary times, before bravery showed in this war, when that note was heard *nowhere* save in an occasional magnificence from Handel, Purcell, Beethoven, or Elgar, and above all in the nobler sorts of public worship—in the glory of Mass, the exultation of the year-end Te Deum, in the splendours of Christmas and Easter, or the supra-mundane grandeur of Gospel, Epistle, hymn, and psalm. In vain you looked elsewhere for a reminder of human nobility or birthright. So much art was a groping or an affectation; so much criticism was illiberal and pernickety; economics was materialism and cheap short-cuts; politics was nearly all evasion of the national issue of Self-preservation, with feeble pacifism insulting the armed and covetous new régimes. Littleness was everywhere. The same spoilt type who were anti-National-Service, anti-O.T.C., and anti-preparedness were often also anti-religious-teaching in the schools. They shirked Birth. They shirked Arms. They shirked the Farming crisis. They shirked Doctrine. They wanted to defy the new daemonism, Nazism—with the mouth. Yes, if the present may prove in the Premier’s words to be “our finest hour,” the two decades preceding it were our meanest. Even the chorus of war-poets, 1914–18, fell voiceless as a grove of birdsong is stilled before a malignant wind. The rotted harvest of those years which the leftist locust had eaten has been reaped in needless agonies, suspenses, and humiliations

in this war. The same mentality would put us all back in the same pit again.

There are signs that both Britain and all the other European peoples who were caught idling, talking, and indulging themselves have learned their awful lesson for a while. Millions have been well sickened of the criminal weakness, "too late, too little, and too feeble," and feel that there is something dishonest in having enormous empire wealth and responsibilities without adequate bolts and locks to secure it. If our enemies are wicked, we have tempted them. Had our democratic life been manlier, they would not have dared war. They watched our literature and journalism, listened to our politically "soft" circles, saw that we refused to have children, to train a defence force, to colonize, to farm and use our land; and drew conclusions for which we cannot blame them, because nobody was more surprised and gratified than ourselves when those adverse verdicts proved largely wrong. In any permanent recovery, *literature* must express and promote the nation's mental health. You may recall how from 1919 onward, thousands made their escape into music; concert halls and the "Proms." were crowded and gramophone records had a boom. It was good, but insufficient. It was too easy, which is why a tired period leaned on it. Many people were tone-topsy, and impatient of other succours. Hence the "flight from reason" and "Caliban in Grub Street," the retreat from letters and logic, the imbecile cabaret night life, the "vile bodies" and "decline and fall," the novels sentimentalizing perversion, the hate of work and discipline, the election appeals without a programme and only the request to "trust" somebody who took his line from the mob. Amazingly, the millions of ordinary people who are kept hard at work escaped the worst of this disease; they were more or less in touch with church and chapel, home and hobbies, and books which they thought good. It must be added that the B.B.C. under Reith gave them half-hours of culture; the vogue of wholesome tales by Priestley and Walpole was a good sign. Now if the written word, the poem and the book, tune the nation's mind, still there will be no literature worth the name without a background of creed and faith. There is no heroism and no social achievement without a belief in the importance of Mansoul. All roads lead to Religion. "There's no discharge from the war" of Thought, and anything less is drug or time-killing, putting us off till some cruel crisis from outside bursts on the opium-eater's paradise.

Chesterton, who was a greater blessing to England than any writer of his time, said a few years ago: "Take at random some fairly typical Englishman and note how little he really *is* anything." That is, conviction is rare, grasp and rootedness are rare. But fluid and tentative "open minds" get nowhere and achieve nothing. The Nazi and Japanese fanaticism and Spartan methods are a God-sent rebuke to us, a command to recover our true Faith which we had let slip from a nerveless grasp. Just in time, Providence delivered the English-speaking world from a false stagnation into a struggle, and we are still trying to gather our spiritual rearmament as we are still painfully attempting our shirked physical rearmament. What will deliver us from this chronic half-and-halfness, this paralysing falling-short of enthusiastic belief, this loss of grip? Religion, revealed and consistent: nothing less. And perhaps our all-in association with Poland and the suffering nations, with 100-per-cent. fighters like China, the Netherlands and Russia, will help to clarify our mist.

W. J. BLYTON.

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## *A Song in the Night*

**I**N the night I have heard the wild song of a bird  
And the singing of children, nearby in a wood,  
Where not a leaf whispered and not a bough stirred;  
And the world was all white with the mystical light  
Of the moon's milky flood  
As a hymn to the Virgin arose clear and mild  
Through the beautiful night, in the voice of a child.

Now I listen in vain, through the wind and the rain,  
For a voice in the darkness, a song in the night—  
For a guide to my spirit that, dreaming in pain,  
Is groping its way through the night to the day—  
From the dark to the light,—  
Where the song of the wild bird, the cry of the soul,  
And all love, all music, are one perfect whole.

HELEN NICHOLSON.

## EUROPEAN BLACK-OUT

"THE lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our life-time." Spoken on the eve of the last World War, these sombre words of an English Foreign Secretary have not been belied by the event. The darkness has not merely deepened; it has spread further afield. The European black-out has become world-wide. And the rekindling of the lamps seems further off than ever.

But we need to remind ourselves that happenings in the material world are, as a general rule, little more than visible manifestations of invisible forces at work at a level beyond man's perception. Even in the sphere of Nature, the blossoming of Spring is the outward sign of a renewal of life within. In man's case, his material actions do but manifest what he himself is. It is said that, before the first gift which the lover makes, he has already made the gift of his love. The murderer who drives a knife into his victim has already slain him in will and intention. And, on the larger scale, the butchery of 1914-1918, the treachery and violence and ruthless self-seeking of the present war, are but the logical and inevitable outcome of man's revolt from God and God's law, a revolt which took place long before the Kaiser tore up a scrap of paper or Hitler's patience was exhausted. The lamps had been going out over Europe for decades, even for centuries before Sir Edward Grey's words were spoken.

And if that is true on the debit side, so to call it, it remains true of the credit side. If man's revolt from God precedes the historical effects of that revolt, so must we believe that the signs of man's return will become apparent only after the event, which is why the Christian may never despair—however black the hour may be. But neither is he permitted to stand by with folded arms and "wait on God." There has been far too much of such an attitude in the past: which is perhaps the chief cause of our present discontents. The Christian believes that the overruling Providence of God can and does turn even man's wickedness and stupidity to good account. But that does not mean that man, on his side, is entitled to indulge in wickedness and stupidity, in order to provide the raw material, so to say, for God's corrective

action. We may not talk of "making things easy" for God. But it remains true that God employs human agencies to effect His purposes. And it is at once our privilege and our duty to turn ourselves into efficient instruments of God's service. God *can* light lamps miraculously. But it would be presumption on our part not to provide ourselves with matches.

All this is obvious to the point of platitude; it yet needs saying. For there is far too much Quietism in the make-up of many a devout Catholic. How many of us, praying with any amount of "fervour" that God's Will may be done, praying, as we believe, "for our country," "for Europe," "for peace" do not fall into the error of supposing that that is the end of it—that now God must implement our prayers? How many of us believe, are convinced, that God has to a large extent put it into our power to bring about His Will? How many of us do not interpret Our Lord's words "Be not solicitous" and the like in a sense that allows us to have no solicitude even for our neighbour's good? How many of us remember those other words: "When you have done all that is required of you, say: 'We are unprofitable servants' "?

If then the lamps have gone out all over Europe, may it not be that the fault is to be laid, in some degree, at the door of many a soul that thought herself wise and has been found to be foolish? "Let your light shine before men. . . ." Have we perhaps been too anxious to shield the little flame of our lamp from the breath of the world without, and so hidden its light instead of letting it shed its beams afar? If we examine the causes that led up to the black-out, shall we discover that the guilt is to be attributed entirely to others, or are we, we of the household of the Faith, not a little to blame? At any rate let us try to analyse those causes and see to what conclusions we shall be led.

Now it is easy enough to trace the present condition of Europe to the religious revolt of the sixteenth century. But, even if such an explanation is true as far as it goes, it begs a very large question. We must still ask ourselves why the Reformation happened—not merely why it succeeded, but why it started at all. The *simpliste* answer would be to throw all the responsibility on certain recalcitrant Catholics, on a small number of corrupt religious, on a handful of restless thinkers, on this or that individual—Martin Luther, Henry VIII. . . . And behind such an answer is the attitude of mind which thinks of the Church as she exists on earth, in terms of the heavenly vision vouchsafed to St. John, or as the Bride of

Christ without spot or wrinkle in the ideal of St. Paul. And we have to remind ourselves constantly that the Church only approximates to that ideal according to the degree in which her members are striving to be perfect. There never was a time when that ideal was realized, nor are we justified in believing that it ever will be realized on this earth. The only assurance we are given on the subject is the purely negative one that her enemies will not prevail.

Meanwhile we have to bear in mind the simple truth that the Church is herself part of the historical process in which man is working out his immortal destiny. The historical process as such is not enormously important. The Saints, in their apparently callous way, had a habit of dismissing it all with the rhetorical question: *Quid hoc ad aeternitatem?* Socrates expressed the question in a different form: "When a mind can take a large view and beholds the whole of time and of all that is, do you think that such a mind is capable of considering man's life anything very important?" When all is said and done, the events of human history are ultimately important only in so far as the eternal values are involved. Human wars, for example, are little more than symbols of the secular struggle between right and wrong. The rise and fall of nations is a trivial matter compared with the moral struggle in the heart of the most degraded savage. And even statistics such as the numerical strength of the Church are not necessarily an index to the state of the world at this or that epoch.

The sober truth is that Europe is not Christian to-day because it never has been. We talk glibly enough of the "Christian tradition" of Europe. We proclaim our purpose of fighting to defend the "Christian inheritance" of Europe. We picture to ourselves some Utopia, and call it "Christian civilization." If we were pressed to specify a little more exactly what these vague terms meant, we should probably point to some period of the Middle Ages—say the thirteenth century—or to some particular country, in which the profession of Christian beliefs and principles was common, and the majority of men called themselves practising Christians. But if we really knew enough of history, we should be compelled to admit that there has never been a time or a country in which the profession of Christianity was much more than lip-service on the part of the majority of the "faithful." Here and there we should find individuals or small groups of people—as in the more fervent religious houses—for whom Christ was literally

all, who saw everything in terms of Christ. Apart from them, religion has at all times been little more than a veneer, of varying depth, upon a largely pagan way of life—a way of life, that is to say, good enough in itself, but not in any sense explicitly Christian.

If this is not so, how are we to explain the Catholic attitude to martyrdom? On the face of it martyrdom is an exceptional thing. Yet, if all the millions of men who have professed Christianity had been genuine Christians—men, that is, for whom Christ was all—martyrdom would have been taken for granted as the natural consummation of life. As a man lives, so shall he die. If he lives bearing witness to Christ, his death, however it comes, will be but a further witnessing, inevitable, logical. Or, without taking such an extreme example, is it not obvious that, in the vast majority of cases, Christian men put their personal needs before the demands of their Christian vocation? In the so-called Catholic countries, all too often nationalism has proved a stronger force than Christianity, whether in earlier centuries, as when the success of the Protestant princes of Germany was assured by the opportunist policy of the Catholic statesmen and sovereigns of France, or to-day, when national claims and national interests are almost universally allowed to prevail over the claims of conscience.

It is true that in the earlier centuries of the history of Christianity the conflict was different. In those days the national consciousness had not yet been stimulated. But the history of Europe is stained with too many crimes which were the result of an abuse of temporal power by spiritual lords or of a hostility to the rightful claims of the Church on the part of Christian princes and statesmen. The power of a small body of determined believers forced the empire of Rome to acknowledge the arrival of a new force in the world. But the "conversion" of the Empire left how much to be done in the way of humanizing and bringing under restraint the sub-human forces at work in the heart of fallen man. Always the story is the same. A handful of genuine Christians toiling to keep alight the flame of truth in an indifferent or hostile world. Local successes are gained, to be off-set by failures from within or fresh attacks from without. Heresy follows heresy; scandal follows scandal; apostasy follows apostasy. Popes and cardinals not less than kings and nobles figure in the sad story of the betrayal of Christ by Christian men.

Flaubert remarked: "Notre ignorance de l'histoire nous fait calomnier notre temps. On a toujours été comme ça." At first sight the remark seems a piece of mere cynicism, unnecessarily depressing and quite untrue. But is it? It is at any rate curious to realize that at every stage of the world's history there have not been wanting men to castigate the vices of their age, and to suggest that it was the worst epoch ever known. The Jewish prophets constantly found it necessary to recall their contemporaries to an earlier standard of purity in belief and practice: Greek and Roman poets are full of a similar theme—

aetas parentum peior avis tulit  
nos nequiores, mox datus  
progeniem vitiosiorem:<sup>1</sup>

whilst there is scarcely a Christian moralist or preacher who does not somewhere or other dwell upon the unprecedented wickedness of his contemporaries. We in this century have supped full of horrors, and find it difficult to imagine a state of the world where perjury, brutality, selfish greed, irreligion, and every form of moral degradation were more in evidence.

Perhaps the answer is to be found in that last phrase. Contemporary wickedness is more in evidence: and therefore, for us, is more real than all the crime recorded in history. But there is a further consideration affecting the judgment of twentieth-century man; and that is the reflection that the world is still so wicked after two thousand years of Christian endeavour.

Two thousand years of Christian endeavour! Two thousand years during which millions of men have worked and lived and died bearing witness to Christ! Two thousand years during which, with the resources of Omnipotence behind them, men over the face of the world have striven to bring the knowledge of the truth to their fellow-men! May be. But it seems, to say the least, unlikely that if, during all those two thousand years, men had not failed Christ, Christ would have failed them.

Where has the failure been? There have, of course, been failures on the part of individuals and masses of men to live a

<sup>1</sup> Horace, *Odes* iii 6:

"Our fathers' age, itself debased,  
Gave birth to us, who further traced  
The tale of sin; next, in our sons,  
The course of evil swifter runs."

fully Christian life as they conceived it; failure in detail, more or less trivial, on the part of all, even the greatest Saints. But there has also been a massive failure to realize to the full the scope and promise of Christianity. Almost always and almost universally men have forgotten something of the complex and many-sided thing we call Christianity. Almost universally men have sought to narrow the breadth and sweep of Christ's message, to contract to their own measure the stature of Christ Himself, instead of allowing themselves to grow up to the height of His stature. Too often "orthodoxy" has been merely an excuse for mental laziness. Men have been content to accept a formula—traditional, valid, certain—without giving to it that life which the spirit can alone impart, without which the formula itself remains a dead letter. We repeat the Apostles' Creed. Do we live it? We hold fast to the truth. Do we "do the truth—in charity"? Is not the "truth" all too often little more than a stick with which to beat a traditional enemy? Is there not considerable justification for the taunt of the unbeliever that—for many believers at any rate—the faith has become a literalistic and legalistic *system*, a code of external observance, a corpus of unintelligently accepted formulations, a sterile and unprogressive Law?

Law there must be: dogma there must be: ritual there must be. But let us never forget those other things: let us never forget that, if we have been chosen, we have been chosen "to go and bear fruit. . . ." For, "the kingdom of heaven is like to leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened." Now if there is one feature that can be asserted about leaven with some confidence it is that it does not exist to remain in splendid isolation. Its whole purpose is to have an effect upon other material. And to achieve that purpose it must enter into the closest possible union with this other material, it must be plunged into it, working upon it, even as it is itself worked upon by it. Were we to force the parable too far we should be required to suppose that the "leaven" of Christianity must lose its own identity, must become so intimately united with the material it works upon that it loses all that makes it what it is. To no such conclusion can we allow ourselves to be led.

But what does emerge from a study of the parable is surely the certainty that anything like "exclusiveness" is utterly contrary to the spirit of Christ. Further, it seems necessary

to conclude that to attempt to work out one's "perfection" in isolation is to attempt the impossible—since the perfection of a Christian consists precisely in performing the essentially social function of leavening the mass. Nor must "isolation" here be understood as condemning the withdrawal from the world of the hermit or the contemplative nun. The isolation we have in mind is clearly an aloofness of the spirit, an attitude of mind which, if it does not actually despise those outside the Church, is at least not sufficiently alive to the duty of a sympathetic understanding of their position and of their needs.

What those needs are is obvious to every thinking Christian. Darkness has descended upon Europe because men have refused to admit the only possible source of light—the "true light which enlighteneth every man that comes into this world." That is a truism. It needs no repeating. What does need insisting upon is the fact that it is practically useless to preach to non-Christians their need of Christ, unless the brightness of our own lives, the blaze of Christ-in-us is present to bear witness to the truth of our words. And what does that mean in practice? It means that it is not enough merely to be "devout," merely to be regular in our church-going, merely to observe the details of the Church's law. It means that we must let men see that the fully Christian life possesses all the value of the "good pagan" life, all the humanitarian sympathy, all the natural virtue, all the ready heroism and the cheerful self-sacrifice which are so often more obvious in the "unbeliever" than in the "good Christian"—all this, elevated, ennobled, raised to the level of the divine by the indwelling Spirit of God.

When shall we learn to look upon our fellow-men—"godless," "pagan," "irreligious" as they may be—with something approaching the tolerance of Christ? "Hate sin: love the sinner." For all the viciousness of so many of God's creatures, they remain God's creatures. Let us try to cultivate the habit of thinking of them in that way—as men like to ourselves, with our crying needs, our shortcomings, our weaknesses. The inscrutable ways of God have chosen us out for grace, have saved us from ourselves. Still, there—there in that poor, groping, well-intentioned but hopelessly misguided creature—go I. I have not been given my talent to hug to my bosom. God has not kindled in me the light of His truth merely to guide me to safety, still less to be hidden under the bushel of my self-complacent and intolerant superiority. In this way we

may hope to avoid that attitude of condescension which is so liable to prevent the good that well-intentioned souls hope to achieve—the attitude of the comfortable and well-dressed Society lady who goes "slumming."

Above all, let us recall the obvious fact that, even if we have been chosen to play the part of leaven in God's scheme, we need the meal as much as the meal needs us. The perfection of God's world, in other terms, is brought about by the supernaturalization of a naturally good thing. The tragedy of the modern world is, all too often, that so much excellent material fails to achieve that perfection which it can achieve only in Christ. But how often do we not have to lament the sad fact that from a natural point of view there is so much better material to be found in the pagan than in the Christian? Whilst it is certain that the Christian in a state of grace is, absolutely speaking, infinitely more pleasing in the sight of God than the most perfect pagan, we have the parable of the talents to remind us that we shall be judged, not on our possession of this priceless gift, but upon the use we have made of it.

We have, quite obviously, an enormous responsibility to our generation. Christians in the past have failed to play their part in the task of spreading the light of Christ in the world. For that reason, the black-out which confronts us demands of us a twofold effort. We and we alone, under God, can save Europe and the world. But we shall not do it unless we approach our task in a spirit of repentant humility. We shall not do it unless we are prepared to pool our resources, to co-operate with good will, wherever it may exist, ready to admit that, whilst we claim the possession of the fulness of revelation, that does not mean we have not much to learn from others. Salvation will not come to the world by the application of ready-made formulas. It will only come by the patient, self-denying, unflinching readiness to learn as well as to teach: to believe that Catholics do not possess a monopoly of political wisdom or economic skill: to admit that men are, on the whole, more ignorant of what we have to offer than hostile to us: to abandon prejudices sprung of our own ignorance of them: to be, like St. Paul, "all things to all men."

The effect of such a determination will be not compromise but clarification. Viewing our Christian principles in the light of the practical needs of contemporary society, we shall be led to a fuller appreciation of what those principles involve. Whereas, if we content ourselves with the mere restatement of

conventional formulae, in a spirit of unsympathetic dogmatism, not only shall we fail to help others but we shall fail to grasp an opportunity to learn ourselves.

Let us take an important illustration. We are all agreed that modern education is in thorough need of reform. Now it is true that, for centuries, both before and after the Reformation, the monasteries, the universities, the colleges of the Society of Jesus were the chief educational forces in Europe. But if we are to restore a genuinely Christian education in this country, it cannot be achieved by ignoring the work that has been done by educational pioneers and experts outside the Church. The result might be technically "Christian": would it necessarily be education? What we have to insist upon is that whatever is naturally good is grist for the Christian mill, or, to return to our Lord's metaphor, is meal to be worked upon by the leaven of Christian effort.

One last suggestion. Whilst the Reformation was a powerful force, it was inevitable that the Counter-Reformation should concentrate largely on critical, negative, "delaying-action" tactics. Now that the Reformation has spent itself to a very large extent, it is perhaps time for us to approach its victims in a more conciliatory, constructive, progressive spirit. It may be true that, but for the revolt of the sixteenth century, Europe would not be in such a sorry plight to-day; but little is to be gained by harping on that theme. Crisis is upon us. And, just as we have been glad to ally ourselves in the military sphere with the armed might of Russia against a common foe, so, whilst abating no jot of our Catholic beliefs, we may surely be happy to co-operate against godlessness with men of good will wherever they may be found.

THOMAS CORBISHLEY.

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O everlasting kingdom, kingdom of endless ages, whereon rests the untroubled light and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, where the souls of the saints are at rest, and everlasting joy is upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing have fled away. Oh, how glorious is the kingdom in which Thy saints reign with Thee. . . . For there is infinite unfading joy, gladness without sorrow, health without a pang, life without toil, light without darkness, life without death: there the vigour of age knows no decay, and beauty withers not, nor doth love grow cold, nor joy wane away, for there we look evermore upon the face of the Lord of Hosts.

(St. Augustine.)

## CATHOLIC LITERATURE IN CANADA

WRITING some fourteen years ago to the well-known Catholic writer of Toronto, Dr. Thomas O'Hagan, a French-Canadian, Dr. Benjamin Sulte, says (I translate): "You may tell your English-speaking readers of Ontario that the literature of the French-Canadians is by no means a copy or imitation of the books of France, but that it is purely Canadian;<sup>1</sup> and, as for the language, it is a French as pure as that of the writers of France. . . . We have a copious and truly national literature which merits the attention of the readers of all the provinces of Canada. . . ."

These sentences not only sum up pretty well the burden of the book to which they are prefixed—Dr. O'Hagan's "Intimacies in Canadian Life and Letters";<sup>2</sup> they also seem to the present writer to summarize the judgments of those who have any close acquaintance with French-Canadian literature. But the number of those outside of Canada who have any such close acquaintance would seem to be exceedingly small. It is even refreshing to find a Canadian like Dr. O'Hagan who is not a French-Canadian showing sufficient acquaintance with it to furnish forth such chapters of his book as "French-Canadian Poets and Poetry," "The Patriotic Note in Canadian Poetry," and "Some French-Canadian Prose Writers."

We can hardly do better than take Dr. O'Hagan for our guide in the present article, supplementing his account from other sources of information. Let it in the first place be remarked that the French-Canadian is a very young literature. Though books were published in French both before and since the fall of Quebec in 1760, it is not till towards 1850 that Canadian literature, at all events its *belles lettres*, may be said to have found itself and launched out on a career quite distinct from the literature of the mother country. To begin with, it was in the years between 1852 and 1862 that Octave Crémazie, often referred to as the national poet of Canada or

<sup>1</sup> "The French-Canadians are homogeneous culturally as well as racially, for there is a French-Canadian culture perfectly distinct from that of France and just as North American as is the culture of the United States."—Wilfrid Bovey: "The French-Canadians To-day," p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ottawa: Graphic Publishers, Ltd., 1927.

the "Morning Star" of French-Canadian poetry, published his work. His poetry was not only Canadian and patriotic: it was also poetry. Since his death in 1878 French Canada has not, perhaps, produced a great poet, but she has produced many writers of genuine poetic talent. Dr. O'Hagan gives us samples of the work of Napoléon Legendre, of Pamphile Lemay who "had a very high artistic sense and a great spiritual endowment as a poet," Louis Fréchette (his "*Les Fleurs Boréales*" was crowned by the French Academy), William Chapman whose "*Les Aspirations*" and "*Les Rayons du Nord*" likewise gained the honours of the French Academy, Benjamin Sulte, and eight or nine of the younger poets, especially Robert Choquette of Montreal.

Among women poets may be mentioned Pauline Fréchette and Madame Beauregard, each the author of several volumes of verse, Madame Huguenin, Adèle Bibaud, and Clara Lanctot, the blind author of "*Visions Encloses*."

There are certain characteristics common to nearly all these poets and to others who might be mentioned. One is that they are prolific, not contributors of occasional verse to magazines but authors of many volumes. Another trait is their genuine Catholicism, though few are writers of religious verse. Again they are intensely Canadian. The very titles of their works are evidence of that—Crémazie's "*Le Drapeau de Carillon*,"<sup>1</sup> "*Le Canada*," Lemay's "*Aux Expatriés*," Fréchette's "*Les Fleurs Boréales*," Chapman's "*Les Québecquoises*,"<sup>2</sup> Sulte's "*Les Laurentiennes*." On the other hand the intellectual or philosophical content of French-Canadian poetry does not seem very noteworthy.

These traits are well illustrated by a volume of sonnets, "*Les Gouttelettes*," by Pamphile Lemay, which lies before me. That it is thoroughly Catholic is evidenced by the groups of sonnets entitled "*Sonnets bibliques*," "*Sonnets évangéliques*," and "*Souffles religieux*." It is written in perfect French, but the inspiration is Canadian, and many of the themes— "*Jacques Cartier*," "*Champlain*," "*Wolf et Montcalm*," "*Les Patriotes de 1837*," "*Fréchette*," and the "*Sonnets rustiques*." And then, as though to deprecate my criticism, there is a little group of sonnets entitled "*Grains de philosophie*!" Altogether this is a very charming volume.

<sup>1</sup> The brilliant defeat of the British by the French (with a sprinkling of the Irish Brigade) at Ticonderoga in 1758 was celebrated as the Carillon victory.

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note among French-Canadian writers names such as Chapman, Nelligan, Gill, and Dunn.

"French-Canadian poetry," says Dr. O'Hagan, "is a mirror of the people. It is replete with joy and beauty and the fine optimism of consecrated hearts."

French-Canadians have been less successful with fiction. It was in the sixties of the last century that Philippe de Gaspé gave to French-Canadian letters its first work of fiction, "Les Anciens Canadiens," which embodies local and historical reminiscences. Then there was the novel "Jacques et Marie" by Napoléon Bourassa which tells in prose the story told by Longfellow in "Evangeline." "Jean Rivard" by Gerin-Lajoie is a tale of the Canadian backwoods. Dr. Chauveau and the Abbé Casgrain also published fiction. But the outstanding novel of Canadian life is surely "Maria Chapdelaine" by Louis Hémon, a writer who produced little else of value, and who died young. It is indeed a very charming story.<sup>1</sup>

Students of Canadian literature have remarked how large a place the history of their country holds in the preoccupations of French-Canadians. Indeed, when history is in question we must go back not to the middle of the nineteenth century, but to the early days of the French colonization of Canada. It was characteristic of these pioneers that they not only made history but wrote it. And they wrote it, for the most part, not as foreigners exploring a strange country, but as inhabitants of a country which they had made their home for life. Dollier de Casson's history of Montreal is, it has been said, as North American as if it were written yesterday. Still of deep interest are the writings of the great Samuel de Champlain,<sup>2</sup> the narrative of Père Marquette, the Jesuit Relations, the voluminous writings of Mère Marie de l'Incarnation, that wonderful woman who founded schools and hospitals in Quebec in days when hostile Indians skulked in the woods across the river.<sup>3</sup> "Her memoirs," says Wilfrid Bovey, "are as Canadian as a spruce tree."

But it was in the nineteenth century that historical writing flourished exceedingly in French Canada. François Xavier Garneau was perhaps the greatest of Canadian historians. His history of Canada, on which the highest praises have been

<sup>1</sup> There have been published several translations into English of this novel. One of them was issued by Macmillan, of London.

<sup>2</sup> His works have been edited in two volumes by the Abbé C. H. Laverdiere.

<sup>3</sup> A fine edition of these *Écrits spirituels et historiques* was published in 1929-35 in three quarto volumes averaging 400 pages each, by the Action Sociale of Quebec and Desclée of Paris. Cf. also two articles by Fr. James Brodrick, S.J., in *The Month* (January and February, 1940) entitled "The St. Teresa of the New World."

lavished, was written between 1840 and 1848. He does not stand alone, however. The Abbé Ferland, besides important monographs and the editing of documents, published in 1861 and 1865 the two volumes of his "Cours d'Histoire du Canada." On even a larger scale was Benjamin Sulte's eight-volume history of the French-Canadians which appeared from 1882-1885. Another historian of importance was the Abbé Henri Raymond Casgrain (1831-1904), who was also novelist, poet, and literary critic. He has been termed the foster-father of French-Canadian literature, for he was the centre and *animateur* of a literary circle in Quebec which included such men of letters as Dr. de la Rue, Joseph Charles Taché, Antoine Gerin-Lajoie, and Philippe Aubert de Gaspé. He published biographies of Canadian writers, edited the works of Crémazie, and enriched Canadian literature with a long series of works, chiefly historical monographs. Dr. O'Hagan speaks of the Hon. Thomas Chapais as "our greatest living French-Canadian historian."

Besides the historians and the novelists there are, of course, other prose writers to be considered. Foremost among them in his day was Dr. Adolphe Routhier, literary critic and lecturer. "In all his works," writes Dr. O'Hagan, "he reveals a breadth of scholarship, a supreme literary taste, and a poise of judgment surpassing, we think, that of any other Canadian writer, either in English or in French." Among his works are "Causeries du Dimanche," "Portraits et Pastels Littéraires," "A Travers l'Europe," "Les Grands Drames" (a study of the great dramatists from Aeschylus to Victor Hugo), "Le Centurion" (a romance of the time of Christ), and "Conférences et Discours."

There have been other critics of distinction such as Mgr. Joseph Camille Roy, author of "Nos Origines Littéraires," and "Nouveaux Essais sur la Littérature Canadienne," Mgr. Olivier Maurault, Canon Emile Chartier, Victor Morin, Maurice Hébert, and others not a few.

Canada has produced some brilliant journalists, notably M. Henri Bourassa, who indeed is more than a journalist, as witness his "Le Canada Apostolique" and other works. Another very able journalist was J. P. Tardwel, "the Louis Veuillot of Canada," founder of *La Vérité* of Quebec, a tremendous force in Catholic life there. This mention of journalists reminds us that French-Canada possesses a very flourishing Press. Personally I am best acquainted with three of its periodicals—*La Presse* of Montreal, which has a daily circula-

lation of over 150,000 copies, and is much larger than the *London Times*; *Le Devoir*, Henri Bourassa's valiant paper which looks exactly like a Parisian daily; and the learned *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa*. But it would be easy to quote a long series of names of newspapers and magazines appearing not only in the province of Quebec but all over Canada and in many cities of the United States. Many of these are dailies, whereas there is not a single Irish daily paper in all North America. Catholic Action is represented in the Press by *Action Catholique* of Quebec, *Le Devoir* of Montreal, and *Le Droit* of Ottawa.

Catholic or rather social-Catholic propaganda is carried on by the pamphlets, of which upwards of three hundred have appeared, of the Action Sociale Catholique of Montreal. We possess most of these in the Dublin Catholic Library. L'Action Catholique of Quebec is among other things a publishing and bookselling concern: it describes itself as a *Librairie de propagande religieuse et sociale*, and its catalogue, now before me, is very comprehensive in its scope. Canada has, like France, its *Semaines Sociales*. The proceedings of these congresses, seventeen of them, have been published in book form.

It is interesting to glance through the catalogue of such booksellers and publishers as Beauchemin of Montreal and Garneau of Quebec. They contain a very wide range of literature, and give evidence of intense intellectual activity in Canada. They witness, likewise, to deep and widespread interest in religion in all its phases among French-Canadian Catholics.

Indeed, if hitherto I have spoken chiefly of *belles lettres*, it must not be thought that Canadians fall short of other countries in the production of religious literature. True, it would not be surprising if they did, for they can call upon the rich religious literature both of France and of the English-speaking world. Yet in point of fact one has but to glance through the above-mentioned catalogues to convince oneself that much religious literature is produced in Canada. Moreover religion is an element in almost all French-Canadian writing. "One element," writes Colonel Bovey, "in French-Canadian literature though all-pervading is not obvious. It is like the atmosphere of a landscape that challenges the painter. That element is religion. The writer and the reader may not think of it, but it is always there."<sup>1</sup>

The same writer notes as further characteristics of French-

<sup>1</sup> "The French Canadians To-day," p. 273.

Canadian literature the spirit of the *terroir*, the land and all that belongs to it, the mark of Latin (and also Greek) culture resulting from classical college training; and preoccupation with historical themes.

The Canadian Catholics have accomplished one feat not, I think, attempted by Catholics elsewhere, they have produced a fine "Encyclopédie de la Jeunesse" (published by the Société Grolier of Montreal) in thirteen volumes (5,000 pages, 10,000 illustrations), written entirely by Canadians for Canadians.

I find that I have said nothing about such distinguished writers as Mgr. Bruchesi, Cardinal Villeneuve, Sir Hippolite Lafontaine, Oscar Dunn, and Arthur Buies; of the two Abbés Gosselin, or of the Abbé Lionel Groulx, author of "La Naissance d'une Race," a life of Mgr. Laval, and many other works; of Victor Morin, Father Beaudé, author of a three-volume work on the history of Acadia, Father Archambault, S.J., of the Action Sociale Populaire, Mgr. L. A. Paquet, or N. E. Dionne, author of "Galéries Historiques." The list might be prolonged, but it could be only a bare list of names.

If hitherto I have spoken almost exclusively of the literature of the French-Canadians, that is in the first place because it is so little known to any but themselves that Colonel Bovey even says that "Canadian Schools and Universities seem to be quite unaware for the most part that there is a French-Canadian culture and a French-Canadian literature." The United States and Great Britain are, it would appear, still more ignorant of the subject. On the other hand the English-speaking Canadian Catholics do not seem to have developed as yet any distinctive culture or literature. This is possibly not surprising, seeing that they belong to many different races—English, Scottish, Irish, and of late years people from many other European countries as well.

As a sample of Canadian Catholic literature in English may be cited the work of Thomas O'Hagan of Toronto. He is thoroughly Canadian in outlook and sympathies. Canada inspires the six published volumes of his verse and many of his essays.

Yet he is not narrowly national. He has travelled much, as witness such volumes as "With Staff and Scrip," "Spain and Her Daughters," and he is a member of the Dante Society. His "Genesis of Christian Art" and his volumes of critical and historical essays are catholic in their wide interests as well as

Catholic in their outlook. So, too, are his "Essays on Catholic Life."

Moreover he is a sort of connecting link between the two great divisions in Canada, for in his "Intimacies in Canadian Life and Letters" he writes with knowledge and admiration of French-Canadian literature, and says in his Preface: "Is it not fortunate for us Canadians that we have within our Dominion a people who represent the idealism and culture of France?"

STEPHEN J. BROWN.

### *In Via*

MOTHER OF CHRIST, in love and fear  
I sought thy house, but it was not here.

Thy holy house is further far  
Than the new moon or the morning star.

One white star amid the blue.  
And a long road to win thereto

From the Dark House to the House of Gold  
The dim woods gather in fold on fold.

The forest darkens to west and north,  
By meadow and wood the road goes forth.

By the shadowy land and the misty vale  
And the haunted woods of fairy tale.

By the windmill grey and the house forlorn  
The straight road runs through the standing corn.

By the long blue hills and the flat sea-shore  
And my own lost land where I come no more.

By the windy quays and the waiting ships  
Where the taste of the salt is on my lips.

Over the sea thy portals stand  
And thy tall towers rise in a far-off land.

Ah, remember me, Full of Grace,  
And send thine angel before my face.

Remember the roads and the bitter sea  
And send thine angel to come with me.

Till the seas are crossed and the journey past  
And my feet come in at thy doors at last.

ELIZABETH BELLOC.

## CHRISTIANS AT BAY

**T**HREE is plenty of real evidence that both Catholics and Protestants on the Continent are resisting Nazi pressure—for religious as well as patriotic motives—and, in many cases, are actively combating Nazism. This is very clear in the Low Countries. The Catholic bishops of Holland and Belgium refuse the sacraments and Christian burial to members of the “Quisling” parties which the Nazis have organized in their countries, and will not baptize their children—on the strict canonical ground that there is no hope that these children will be brought up as Catholics. The position is perhaps stronger in Holland. There the Dutch Calvinist authorities are every bit as firm as their Catholic colleagues, and there is no awkward “race and language” difficulty such as exists in Belgium between Flemings and Walloons and is being exploited, of course, in the Nazi interest.

The Nazi occupants of Holland and Belgium are either loath or afraid to adopt very severe measures: the religious and national opposition is so marked. Their method is to attack and, as they imagine, to discredit the religious leaders through the “Quisling” Press. On February 1st, 1942, a Lenten pastoral was read in the churches of the archdiocese of Malines. The text is not yet available outside Belgium, but it is obvious from criticisms in the Nazi-inspired papers that Cardinal van Roey insisted in the pastoral that the first condition for a durable peace is that Belgium should be entirely free, and that, as far as any so-called “New Order” went, only a sovereign Belgium could decide whether or not she would have any part in it.

The Cardinal was referring to the first of the Papal Peace Points, enunciated by Pius XII on Christmas Eve, 1939, and re-affirmed on Christmas Eve, 1941. A few days after the reading of the pastoral, the Nazi Flemish paper *Volk en Staat* tried to argue that the Pope’s Christmas Eve allocution supported the Nazi New Order, and that the Pope’s mention of “freedom and independence” could not refer to Belgium since Belgium failed to fulfil certain moral conditions indispensable in Nazi eyes. One sentence from the pastoral is quoted in *Pays Réel* (February 15th): “Every time a new system has attempted to change or abolish the rules of Chris-

tianity that govern family life, experience has proved them wrong. By touching family life they shake the basis of society." The Cardinal was clearly emphasizing the anti-Christian character of Nazi totalitarianism.

In Norway more open pressure is being applied to the Protestant Church. From the start tension has existed between the "Quisling section and the Norwegian Church authorities who have shown themselves one of the stiffest cores of the national resistance. Strong protests were recently registered against the attempt to force the youth into the new "Quisling" youth organization. A climax was reached on February 1st, when the Quislings insisted on a pro-Quisling ceremony being held in Trondheim Cathedral at the hour of the morning service. The ordinary service was postponed until the afternoon, when it was taken by Dr. Fjelbu, the Dean of Trondheim, and was attended by very large crowds. The morning service, at which a pro-Quisling minister functioned, was practically boycotted. Before and during the afternoon service the congregation was interfered with by the Quisling police who blocked the church entrances and threatened those who tried to take part in it. As a result of this disturbance, the Norwegian bishops have resigned from their formal offices and in future —so they announced in a letter read in many churches on March 1st—they will exercise only their directly religious functions. The deans of all the dioceses have rejected a Quisling invitation to carry on in place of the bishops. Indeed, only a very small proportion of the Norwegian clergy—about 2 per cent.—has shown any sympathy with the Quisling régime or given any support to the Nazis' supposed crusade against Russia.

The Primate of the Norwegian Church is Dr. Berggrav, Bishop of Oslo. He has courageously protested against Nazi or Nazi-encouraged interference in Church matters, has denounced the decline in law and order due to the excesses of the Quisling Youth, and has consistently opposed Quisling. Quisling and the German Commissioner, Terboven, often make attacks upon him. When the former was officially made Prime Minister of the puppet administration, Terboven devoted most of his inaugural address to a denunciation of Dr. Berggrav. He recalled pre-war visits paid by the Primate to Germany and England—a proof, in Terboven's mind, of political intrigue. In order to pretend that the initiative in this Church crisis was theirs and not the Primate's, the Quisling Government declared,

on February 16th, that Dr. Berggrav had been dismissed from his office and may no longer use the episcopal title.

Protestant circles, both in Sweden and Finland, have been angered by these Quisling measures against the Norwegian Church. Typical of Swedish comment is an article that appeared in the Stockholm *Tidningen* for February 28th, under the heading "Patriot and Christian."

Dr. Berggrav was not only outstanding in the Norwegian Church and very prominent in the struggles of to-day, but he enjoyed a quite unique position in the whole of northern Christianity and in Nordic cultural life. In Sweden, the name of Berggrav was known and respected long before the events of these latest years. For decades the theological world of Sweden had learnt to appreciate highly his important work and his personality. . . .

In the struggle for the soul of the Norwegian people and the struggle for the position of the Church *vis-à-vis* the State, as well as for the maintenance of law and order—all occasioned by the occupation of Norway and the behaviour of the Quisling régime—Berggrav fully understood his duties both as patriot and Christian.

That the Polish people are opposing an unflinching religious resistance to Nazism is more than evident. There, more than in any other occupied country, rages a veritable and a foully conducted persecution of the Church. This persecution was the subject of two long reports, submitted in 1940 to the Pope by Cardinal Hlond, the Polish Primate. Details from these reports as well as more recent information of Nazi persecution fill more than seventy pages of "The German New Order in Poland"—a necessary but a very terrible indictment of German brutalism and terrorism.<sup>1</sup> A mere glance through its pages is a sickening revelation of the cruelty and bestiality to which human nature—at its worst—can sometimes decline.

The spiritual resistance of the Polish people can scarcely be measured in statistics. Something of it can be glimpsed in a Lenten sermon, broadcast in Polish by Mgr. Kaczynski a few weeks ago.

The Polish nation lives through its Lent amidst inhuman persecutions and ceaseless resistance to the invader. It

<sup>1</sup> Published for the Polish Ministry of Information by Hutchinson and Co. Pp. xiv, 588. Price: 10s. 6d. net. The pages which record this persecution of the Catholic Church in Poland are 317 to 391.

suffers not through its own fault. Yet, in spite of this, our country has realized that the present ordeal calls for the examination of consciences, for a looking back and a finding of oneself again. This retreat has achieved its aim. It has deepened faith, purged the senses, steeled the will, and given strong men to Poland. At home, in the prisoner-of-war camps and in Kazakstan, the Poles have been spiritually regenerated. This is what a prominent Polish scientist writes of his experiences in a camp in Russia:

"In our camp life this spiritual change in the soul of the prisoners has found its expression in a changed appearance and behaviour. The shoulders stooped by misfortune are straightened, the faces smiling, the quarrels and bickering have died down. Faith in the future, in Poland, in our endurance, in the victory of Good over Evil, is growing steadily. . . . I see the catacomb Masses which we held secretly every morning, and I see men who wept from emotion and whose whole being was as one with the priest in a common prayer. I will never forget this experience."

When our countrymen left the prisons and camps, they did not think of past suffering, they heard only the challenge: "It is necessary to forget—to forget one's wrongs and to work for Poland." They acted accordingly.

In order to realize what our soldiers think and feel, listen to the prayer of one of our pilots, the text of which reached me not long ago:

"Be praised, O God, for all our tribulations, for all our sorrows. Obviously it must be that we should reach a new life and freedom through the purgatory of suffering. So be praised, O God Almighty. We must be the chosen people if you force us to suffer so much, if you allow us to scatter our graves all over the world, if we have to die in defence not of our freedom alone. Permit us to return to our home land, to kiss its sacred earth and work again for its glory. It does not matter that so many of us have perished by the way, that our hearts are consumed with longing. . . . We do believe. We believe and that is why we see things clearly and we keep smiling, that we can even die with a smile. We believe that God has not forsaken Poland."

Comment on these words is surely superfluous. Heroism cannot be demanded of everybody, but it is being demanded

to-day of hundreds of thousands, even millions, of the Poles. And they are responding to its stern challenge.

But what—it will be asked—of the situation within Germany? Is there evidence of Catholic and Protestant resistance to Nazism? Yes, there is. The Confessional Church among Protestants and the Catholic Church in Germany have consistently protested against the various Nazi attempts to de-Christianize public life and to rule out every Christian influence. What success have these protests had? Very little, on the whole, though they have managed to put a stop to this or that evil for the time being. The Nazi technique in attacking religion is exactly the same as their military tactics in France and Russia. They test the opposing front—whether military or religious—for a weak point. Then, having discovered it, they attack in force. Should they break through, they push in all available resources—to make as big a breach in that front as possible. Should they meet with resistance, they are elastic enough in their methods to withdraw. The measure is withdrawn, suspended—at times even disclaimed. The general purpose remains, of course, always the same—that of breaking through and destroying all Christian belief and influence in Germany.

Consequently the serious German Catholic finds himself in an unenviable position. He must understand that Nazism is thoroughly antagonistic to the Catholic Church, and indeed to everything Christian. His country's victory would mean the elimination of all Catholic influence and would certainly bring with it a radical persecution of Catholics. On the other hand—as a German—he naturally dreads his country's defeat, particularly as this would involve the triumph of Russia in Eastern and Central Europe. He must surely share the common German apprehension that their enemies and the peoples of the occupied countries may inflict a terrible punishment upon them because of the Nazis' appalling crimes. No doubt there are some German Catholics who are so acutely aware of the dangers to faith and Church of Nazism that they consider any alternative to be preferable, whatever the suffering involved. But, on the whole, men do not argue rationally where national feeling is in question. With many of them there must be an uneasy balance between hopes of a German victory and fears of what that victory might bring—with the vague and self-deceiving hope that their fears may not be realized after all.

The German Catholic bishops, while exhorting the German Catholics to fulfil their civic and military obligations, have given no active countenance to the war. They have not spoken of right and justice, as have Cardinal Hinsley and the hierarchy of the United States. Nor, for that matter—with one or two minor and insignificant exceptions—have the bishops of Italy. The German bishops accepted a difficult situation without—what they may have considered—unnecessary comment. Whether, and how far, comment was advisable, is not easy to judge. One can criticize the German hierarchy—and I have heard German Catholics criticize them bitterly—for their too passive attitude between 1933 and 1939. They defended their positions as best they could. But the initiative was always with the Nazi attacker: and, one by one, the positions were turned or directly taken. They may have been too Maginot-minded in their religious defence as were the French in the summer of 1940, and as we have shown ourselves to be more recently—and with less excuse though with fewer means at our disposal—in the Far East. Perhaps counter-attack was essential to any effective defence. The fact remains that the German Catholic defensive was not really successful, as it had been successful against the *Kulturkampf* of Bismarck. It was complicated by a considerable fifth-column among Catholics themselves, men who had eagerly lapped up the Nazi excuses that whatever measures were taken against bishops, clergy, schools and religious houses were designed purely against “political” Catholicism and were in the country’s—and incidentally the Church’s—better interest.

It is not the intention of this article to adjudge this highly delicate question. What is clear is that the German bishops, though they gave no positive sanction to the war, did refrain from creating difficulties for their Government. Meanwhile, persecution went on intermittently. No doubt the bishops held their protests as long as they decently could—in the national interest. Last summer, however, it was no longer possible to remain silent. The measures of the Gestapo and the continuous interference with directly religious concerns and activities drew forth three energetic sermons from the Bishop of Münster, Graf von Galen. The fact that the bishop was not arrested, or, if arrested, was immediately released (both reports reached this country) shows that his sermons had awakened dangerous Catholic echoes, at any rate in his native Westphalia. It is significant that, although Münster was at

the time being heavily raided by the R.A.F., the bishop made no complaint about this—as part of war's vicissitudes: his entire protest was against the tyrannous behaviour of the Gestapo. From approximately the same period date the protest of Dr. Bornebasser, Bishop of Trier, and a document of the Bavarian bishops denouncing measures that had been adopted to de-Christianize still further the Bavarian schools.

Since this article was begun, an authentic text has been received in this country of the sermon preached on November 30th, 1941, by the Bishop of Trier. He was protesting against the attacks made at public meetings in his diocese by a prominent State official against some of the most cherished ideas of Christianity. Here we give merely the points to which he took exception and not his dignified and courageous exposition of the Catholic teaching on these points.

In the first place he protests "against the blasphemous misuse of the Holy Name of God. In the course of his address the speaker used the blasphemous expressions: 'Jehovah, it is time you went! Jehovah, you are a back number! Jehovah, the game is up!'" He then objects to the ridicule poured upon the Commandments of God. "He who dismisses God likewise dismisses the Ten Commandments as, indeed, the speaker did in these words: 'We recognize only the Laws of Nature, not the Ten Commandments.' The Commandments with their bestialities, he considers, have been good for those swine, the Jews, but not for us!"

And further "the mockery of the Lord's Prayer in this speech was the cause of the deepest pain to all Christians. When a high State official proclaims, as was the case in Koblenz, in a public meeting: 'The man who prays "Our Father . . . give us this day our daily bread" is a slave. . . . One does not pray for bread, one fights for it—that is a degradation of the most sacred of all Christian prayers and deeply offensive to every faithful believer in Christ."

To touch on another point, the bishop declares that he was not surprised but none the less profoundly shocked when the speaker stated: "I would swear any false oath for Germany; yea, fifty a day if need be!" He notes that he does not know whether the chairman called the speaker to order at that moment: but he does know that there was general applause from the public at that particular point.

He gives details of the Nazi closing of churches in his own diocese and in occupied Western Poland. "In the ecclesiastical

province of Cologne, to which we belong, forty-seven monasteries were victims of the attacks upon religious houses of last summer. The sanctuary light has been extinguished in twenty-five churches and chapels which are deprived of the Blessed Sacrament, the Mass and Holy Communion." In Posen, "before the German troops entered the town," there were thirty public churches; now there were only three in which services might be held: the remainder "have been converted into furniture repositories and riding schools or fitted out for other purposes." Before the arrival of German troops, there were 431 public churches in the whole diocese of Posen; to-day only forty-five remained.

The sermon concluded with a touching personal appeal which may well be repeated: "Catholic men and women, dear children; it has been hard for me to preach this sermon. At the beginning of the new Church year I would much rather have given you an Advent address. But it was my sacred duty to preach as I have done to-day. A man of my advanced years knows that the end of his life is not far off. I must soon appear before my Judge. That is why I recently delivered three long sermons on the burning questions of the day. I want to be able to stand before my Creator with a clear conscience and say to Him: 'I have fought for the Truth and proclaimed it to those under me in season and out of season. I have patiently endured insult and calumny in silence for Thy sake. I have visited the flock you confided to my care in their smallest and most remote hamlets, proclaiming the Word of God, bestowing the Holy Spirit in Confirmation, strengthening them in difficult times.'"

It appears likely that these episcopal protests had some degree of success, and that orders were issued from Berlin, putting an end to—or at least a brake upon—these acts of interference with German Catholics.

Only, of course, for the time being. For it is evident that even the war, with its need for national unity, has brought no genuine armistice in the Nazi struggle with the Church. Indeed, there are grounds for thinking that Nazi plans to "heathenize" Germany are being pushed forward, regardless of all consequences. Recently there appeared a book entitled "Gott und Volk: Soldatsches Bekenntnis," published by Theodor Frisch of Berlin. The *Osservatore Romano* of January 22nd, 1942, observed that more than a quarter of a million copies of the book had been sold, and proceeded to quote a

passage from the book to show that the position of the Catholic Church in Germany was anything but satisfactory, in spite of the assertions of Nazi propagandists. The cited passage was as follows:

Our future depends only on ourselves, not on Rome or Judaea. Germany has created herself. We have one Führer, one will, one people. Nevertheless there is still a battle to be fought, the battle for the German man, for the German soul. It will be the most difficult and also the most fruitful and beautiful. Where there is a struggle there is a front. The fronts are evident: one is called Christ, the other Germany. There is no third front, nor is there any compromise, only one clear decision. To-day it is not a question of weakening Catholicism in order to reinforce Protestantism. To-day every alien religion is replaced by a flame in the deepest depth of the German soul. Each epoch has its symbol. Two epochs and two symbols are now facing each other: the cross and the sword. To-day Christianity is under the sign of the cross: Christianity but not the Christian. Our struggle is not against men. It is against an idea. The front of the cross has a strong wing and a weak one. The strong one is Catholicism, the weak one Protestantism. We struggle against both, and the object of the struggle is Germanity. There will be neither dogma nor church, not even a general Christian Church, but only one people that believes in God and in itself.

These sentiments are in the direct line of the Rosenberg tradition with which—it must be remembered—German youth has now been impregnated for nine years. This tradition declares that Nazism is essentially hostile to every form of Christianity, which it regards as alien to the German character and historical development. Except from a tactical point of view, it makes no distinction between Catholicism and Protestantism, merely looking upon the former as its more stubborn and powerful antagonist. Finally, though it makes use of the word "God," this is not intended in the sense of Christianity or even Theism.

These points are brought home with greater clarity in a remarkable memorandum recently circulated by Martin Bormann. Till a short time ago, little was known of Bormann outside of Germany. Now it is clear that he has succeeded to

the position of Rudolf Hess, is head, under Hitler, of the Nazi party, and chief also of the *Reichskanzlei*, being responsible for the appointment and promotion of all Government officials. It is also stated that no law is valid in Germany without Bormann's signature.

The Bormann memorandum repays examination. We venture to analyse it in the following paragraphs.<sup>1</sup>

(1) "The National Socialist point of view is irreconcilable with the Christian." This is Bormann's categorical assertion. He is truer in this assertion than in the grounds he alleges for it. Christianity, he proclaims, is based upon ignorance, whereas Nazism rests on truly scientific foundations. The Christian Churches, of course, in order to hold on to their established position, have had to suppress and falsify the findings of modern scientific research. And so on. There is little need to dwell upon this twaddle. The real point begins to develop in the third paragraph.

No one would know anything about Christianity if it had not been infiltrated into them in childhood by the clergy. The so-called "Dear God" (obviously the German expression *Lieber Gott*) gives no knowledge of His existence to young people, but, strange as it may seem, leaves this, in spite of His Almighty Power, to the efforts of the clergy.

(2) Now what Bormann is denying here is something even more fundamental than the revealed doctrines of the Christian faith. It is the very existence of God—as a Being, separate from and superior to the world, revealing Himself to mankind through His natural creation. For Catholics Bormann's statement merits the term "irreconcilable with the Christian point of view," since it was explicitly defined by the Vatican Council that, by the light of natural reason alone, man can arrive at the knowledge of God's existence. That Bormann denies both the possibility of such knowledge and the very existence of God is evident from the next paragraph of the memorandum. The *Gottgläubigkeit* or "faith in God" which the Nazis profess does not refer to the "God of the naïve Christians" who is thought of as a "humanlike being sitting about somewhere in the spheres." The Nazis' deity is a "natural force," running through the universe, like a vital principle, materialistic in character. This means that, in their view,

<sup>1</sup> Lengthy extracts of the memorandum were given in the *Daily Telegraph* for February 21st. The complete text can be discovered in the *Tablet* of February 28th.

God is not separate from the world, is not personal, is—in fact—simply a physical force. To emphasize his rejection of any personal God he declares:

The opinion that this Universal Power can trouble Himself about the fate of individual beings, even of the smallest cell of earthly life, or can be influenced by so-called prayers or other incredible things rests on an essential dose of *naïveté* or on shameful deceit.

Those who know their Germany and its history of thought will recognize the ancient phenomenon, discoverable in Schelling, Hegel, and the Romantics. It is the old Pantheism re-appearing. Pantheism is really a misnomer for there is nothing *theistic* about it. The world, the universe is everything: God is just a spirit or force—vaguely spiritual or subtly material—that is supposed to inhabit and vivify the physical world. When further narrowed down in the Nazi philosophy, God is merely a racial spirit, dwelling within the German soil and people, and revealing himself in the course of German history and experience. The doctrine is little more than an elaborate version of the tribal deity of some dangerously numerous tribe.

(3) From this denial of God there naturally follows a complete rejection of Christian and even natural ethics.

We National Socialists set before ourselves the aim of living as far as possible by the light of nature, that is by the law of Life.

This "law of life" ignores all values of justice, kindness, mercy, and the rest. "Nature in the raw"—that is the model, and there has been more than sufficient evidence that this has been the Nazi law, both in Germany and in occupied countries. The notion of a personal God has gone: and with it the idea of personal responsibility.

(4) Bormann then draws some practical consequences.

From this irreconcilability of National Socialist and Christian opinions it follows that any strengthening of the existing Christian churches or any encouragement of churches coming into existence is to be rejected. We must not make any difference here between various Christian confessions. For this reason also the thought of building up an Evangelical Church of the Reich through a coming together of the different evangelical churches should be rejected, for the Evangelical Church is as hostile towards us as the Catholic Church.

Then comes a disquisition on past German relations with the Catholic Church. It was a grave mistake on the part of German Emperors, we learn, to assist in promoting order within the Church: their interest lay rather in "splitting up the ecclesiastical network of power." The support they gave to Pope and Church meant that the real leadership of the people was in the Church's hands, not those of the State. Now, in Germany at least, this position has been altered.

The people must be wrested from the Churches and their priests. It is quite natural that the Churches, from their standpoint, will fight against this loss of power, but it must never again be possible for the Churches to have any influence on the leadership of the people. This must be permanently broken. Only the State-leadership, with its associated branches, has the right to lead the people. Just as the harmful influences of astrologers, soothsayers, and similar swindlers must be ruled out, so must the power of the Church be continually reduced. Only when that has happened will the State-leadership have its full influence on individual members of the community, only then will State and people be secure and on firm ground.

From this important and very revealing document certain conclusions can and must be drawn.

(1) In the minds of the Nazi leaders National Socialism is diametrically opposed to every form of Christianity. It is anti-Catholic: it is anti-Christian. In the final instance, they have as little use for a National Lutheran Church in Germany as for the Catholic Church itself. Both must go—that is their wish and intention.

(2) National Socialism not only rejects Christianity: it refuses belief in a God, separate from and higher than the world. Their so-called deity is immanent, world-bound, and—in the last resort—nothing more than material force.

(3) National Socialism has abandoned not merely Christian codes and standards of behaviour: it has thrown aside also the Natural Law writ in human minds and hearts by their Creator.

(4) In the ideal Reich, of which the Nazi leaders have their visions, religion would have ceased to exist. Meanwhile the influence of religion must be eradicated. The Christian "confessions"—i.e. denominations—are to be allowed no share of leadership, moral, educational, or social.

(5) Finally, no factor can be tolerated which will soften in

any way the full effects of totalitarianism. Christian and Church influence is recognized as a bar to the complete totalitarian programme. It emphasizes other-worldly values, the dignity of the human person, the rights of individual and family, and freedom of association. It is the enemy of Nazism: and the Nazis, like the proverbial "children of this world," have been quicker to realize this mortal struggle than many of the "children of light."

We have come a long way from those Hitler pronouncements of 1933 that did so much to lull religious opposition. Seen in retrospect, they are the merest manœuvring and in fact nauseating hypocrisy. It was on March 23rd, 1933, that the new Chancellor gave the following assurances:

The National Government regards the two Christian confessions as factors essential to the soul of the German people. . . .

It declares its determination to leave their rights intact. In the schools, the Government will protect the rightful influence of the Christian bodies. Its whole aim is that there should be peace and concord between Church and State. We hold the spiritual forces of Christianity to be indispensable elements in the moral uplift of the German people.

Those were the days of much talk about "positive Christianity" which was proclaimed a better Nazi variant upon the Christianity of the Churches, but now appears more and more as a heathen Pan-theism or Race-theism.

In Europe to-day Christians are at bay. It is good to face this gravest of realities. It would be folly to indulge in pious delusions that somehow, some day, things will improve and be all right in the end. A definitely, fiercely anti-Christian force is working, and working with frantic intensity, to de-Christianize Germany and, through Germany, to de-Christianize the rest of Europe. Christians have other enemies—Bolshevism, the secularists of every creed and colour, the purely worldly minded. Our enemies to-day—we are dealing for the moment with the Nazis—have, at their command, the full and the terrifying resources of a totalitarian State which is now dominating half and more of Europe. The shadows are lengthening. Christians must pray, endure, and sacrifice before ever the dawn will break anew.

JOHN MURRAY.

<sup>1</sup> *No Mind*

# MISCELLANEA

## I. CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL NOTES

### THE SHROPSHIRE LASS

MARY WEBB (1881-1927)

OF Shropshire writers in the last hundred years Mary Webb is surely the most powerful and gifted. The only rival to the "Shropshire Lass," as Chesterton happily called her, is the author of "The Shropshire Lad." As a poet Housman is beyond question greater, albeit Mary Webb's best poems are but little below her highest achievement, while Housman was not truly a Salopian at all. Although his theme was Shropshire he only knew the country by rare visits, mostly in early youth. His "Shropshire Lad" is no countryman, but like his "Terence" a mask for the poet himself; his Shropshire is a land seen with wondering homage by a highly cultivated traveller and abiding in his powerful memory—a vision of youth shaped with the full powers of mature art, inwoven with a denial of human hopes that is rather a mark of London than the Welsh border. It will hardly be claimed that Thomas Hardy's outlook on life was typical of his birthshire, though he was born and lived in the Dorset or Wessex he knew and loved so well. Much less is Housman Salopian. So far as any province could claim him he belonged to Worcestershire, and one of his finest songs was inspired by Bredon Hill. Alfred Housman, the marvellous master of rhythm and word music, raises the same problem as Milton, exceptional achievement seemingly without greatness of soul. According to the most friendly witnesses, such as his brother, Alfred Housman appears to have been a confirmed cynic of a heartlessness happily rare, cold, self-centred, and repellent.<sup>1</sup> Shropshire has faults enough, but cynicism is not one of them, and it is hardly fair that a distinguished visitor should father upon us his own impious denials.

It will be brought against me that Mary Webb was a keen admirer and in some sort a disciple of Housman. An admirer certainly of his utterance—what poet or lover of poetry is not? He has wedded to lofty and enduring music the land that shares the beauty of England and Wales. The man himself she could not know as biographers have since revealed him. Only a few months before his death Housman corrected his brother's surmise "agnostic" into an emphatic "atheist." Hardy, whose influence on her work was far greater, was certainly at times a blasphemer rather than a denier of God, whereas Mary Webb, who became an after-Christian,

<sup>1</sup> Not always, however. Professor R. W. Chambers in his "Man's Unconquerable Mind" give instances of kind deeds and good offices on his part (pp. 365 ff).

was neither atheist nor blasphemer, but rather a hazy theist, tending at whiles to pantheism, and never formally anti-Christian at all. Indeed, in her last unfinished work, "Armour wherein He Trusted," the most religious in tone and theme of all, we may surely discern tokens of returning footsteps, or at very least the thought of movement homewards.

The hills and streams, woods and meadows, haunted her like a passion, the outlook from high places ranging from the heart of the Midlands to Snowdon and Cader Idris, Berwyn and Abergavenny, enchanted her, but not for long, if indeed she did in any sense deify or worship them; she knew that Nature could not give the peace she longed for. In a hauntingly beautiful poem, "Hill Pastures," written in 1914 (and first published in "A Mary Webb Anthology," 1939), we read:

Once in seven days a plaintive ringing  
 Sounds from the little chapel high in the heather  
 Out with the sorrowful snipe and the whimbrel winging.  
 The wild hill ponies hear it as they graze,  
 And whinny, and call to their foals, and stand at gaze,  
 Hearing a clear voice in the clear weather.

And out of the pine-dark farms and windy places,  
 And quiet cottages low in the valley hiding,  
 Brown folk come with still and wistful faces.  
 Straying by twos and threes, like the peaceful sheep,  
 Into the small brown shippen of souls they creep,  
 Seeking a calm like the hills', but more abiding.

If I am any judge at all, this is a jewel among poems, of true Christian inspiration. Definitely religious, too, is one of seven years later called "Praise."

I'll praise Him with the clover flower  
 That folds her hands and saith no word;  
 I'll praise Him with the dusky bird  
 That flits within the shadowy bower;

I'll praise Him with my soul, which thrills  
 Like trembling wires, and knows Him near  
 In all the sky, so blue and clear,  
 And in the shaken, pansied hills.

This poem is surely as definite a religious landmark as Wordsworth's lines written above Tintern Abbey, and one out of very many tokens that Mary Webb in her roamings found "every common bush afire with God." Mr. Moult tells us that as a young woman she read Darwin's "Origin of Species" and Haeckel's "Riddle of the Universe" (probably in the Rationalist Press edition about 1902), as well as "The Birth of Worlds and Systems,"

and "the consequences were fatal" to her somewhat Evangelical upbringing and belief. At least until the time of her marriage in 1912 she seems to have kept up her active Anglican Church membership, though her brother is quoted as saying "her God was Nature."<sup>1</sup> If so, not lastingly.

She also read Dame Juliana of Norwich, and Mrs. Hamilton King's Hospital poem, and something of their influence remained in her erring but adventurous soul, bearing fruit in her writings early and late, and in her life, in her love of the poor, her royal generosity and almsgiving, her glad embracing of hardship. Ever aspiring, and tender-hearted to all sufferers, she was in truth a Franciscan *manquée*. If only her noble and great qualities had been supernaturalized! The Latin poem, itself most beautiful, that pictures St. Paul at the tomb of Virgil, may well come to our mind at the thought of this gifted singer.

Much has been written of her since she left us, but little indeed of her spiritual history and kinship, which had surely been worth the telling. In spite of much to sadden us, there may be discerned in her work a quality not often found in after-Christian letters. I do not recall any attack upon the Church—she simply did not know the Bride of Christ. If little aware of life's graver responsibilities her soul was without wilful malice. Her very concessions to the modern craze (in general a morbid pose) of "frankness" have a certain childlike innocence about them, like a false conscience.

There is spiritual insight and a quite unmodern thoughtfulness in a passage from one of her earliest essays, long before the days of her fame. "It does not matter how shut in we are. Opportunity for wide experience is of small account in this as in other things: it is depth that brings understanding and life. Dawn, seen through a sick woman's window, however narrow, pulses with the same fresh wonder as it does over the whole width of the sea. A branch of wild-apple brings the same joy as the mauve trumpet-flower of the tropics. One violet is as sweet as an acre of them. And it often happens—as if by a kindly law of compensation—that those who have only one violet find the way through the narrow, purple gate into the land of God, while many who walk over dewy carpets of them do not so much as know that there is a land or a way" ("The Spring of Joy" in "A Mary Webb Anthology," p. 233).

The author of these words cannot be an utter stranger to Christian humility: the spirit of thanksgiving is in them, as it is not in Hardy or Housman. Beside them we may place a few sentences from that last book she left unfinished, one which seems fraught with a certain home-sickness of the wanderer hungry at heart for her father's house.

There is no escape from that which is beautiful. It will

have our homage. Sometimes I have even been glad of

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Moult, "Mary Webb: her Life and Work," 1935, p. 56.

summer's end to rest me. So swiftly the may treads on the heel of the daffodils, and folded roses be waiting even while the may burgeons, and woodbine stills the heart with a sigh, and then corn yellows in every scrap and gore of barleyland, and lo! apples bin-ripe, all painted in one night by an angel. And, methinks, times, it is great peace to turn away from all this lust of loveliness to the chilly call of winter, where is nothing to keep our thoughts back from Him. And then the spirit rests no more in this or that carnal thing of petalled delight, but starteth away hasily over the waste waters, like a seamew, plaining for eternity.<sup>1</sup>

Here, I submit, are the makings of a Catholic mystic, and one is led to think that, had she been granted more years, Mary Webb must needs have met and felt the attraction of the Church of God, of which, for an educated woman, she was strangely unaware. From her recorded friendships and acquaintances Catholic names are signally absent.

General recognition of her genius was late in coming, and only ripened after her death. I cannot even say *Virgilium vidi tantum*, although it is possible, even probable, that in Shrewsbury street or Shropshire road I may have passed her unknowing. To me her life and work strike a note of poignant sadness. There are pages not a few of sheer enchantment, wherein the sounds and scents of nature, her myriad features of majesty and beauty, calm and tempest, her every mood and aspect, live before us in the thrilling and glowing words of this gifted seer. There are also characters (like Reddin) and scenes that haunt us with their gloom and ugly horror. There are dreary pantheistic speculations. But always I hear the undertone of the would-be Christian wanderer, the aspiring soul astray, yet yearning Godward, the exiled heart's home-sickness, that rouses in a Catholic reader that heart-piercing grief with which Newman heard of Thackeray's passing. *O anima naturaliter Christiana!*

H. E. G. ROPE.

#### "MYSTERIUM FIDEI"—AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

TO many it may seem strange that there should in our day be room for anything novel, let alone sensational, in a Catholic book on the theology of the Holy Eucharist. Was it not, as a sacrament and sacrifice, among the first familiar possessions of the Church, never neglected or capable of being forgotten, clearly defended by Popes and Councils against errors medieval, and later, and always, as in our day, one of the commonest topics for pastoral instruction? All that may be true. Theology, however, is not limited to the repetition and safeguard of individual articles of

<sup>1</sup> "Armour wherein He Trusted," p. 242.

faith or even of the truths that obviously are implied in them. These indeed are the certain principles on which the science of theology is founded, but the theologian's task is to draw from his principles every conclusion that they warrant and that in any way conduces to the fruitful knowledge of the Revealer, and to correlate each fragment of truth so obtained into a coherent system of knowledge. The Eucharistic mystery is but one great and complex fact out of many that God has revealed; it and the others have each their own implications and their contacts with other truths; and one does not belittle the theological achievement of past ages in saying that Catholic theology has far from completed that intellectual synthesis of knowledge towards which it is urged by *fides quaerens intellectum*.

That this was true about the Eucharist in our own time must be evident to all who are familiar with the chief dogmatic treatises in use during the past fifty years. That our Lord, God and Man, is really present in the Blessed Sacrament; that He instituted it at the last supper; that there, as a priest, He offered Himself in sacrifice; that our Mass is also a true sacrifice; that there is yet, in some sense, one sacrifice of Christ by which we are redeemed; but that it is most certainly by the death of Christ upon the cross that we are redeemed—all these things are known to every Catholic. But with what scanty success have all these facts been rendered to our minds strictly coherent and consistent and mutually complementary.

To confirm, clarify, and synthesize all this, and much more, was the aim of Fr. M. de la Taille, S.J., in the theological book, written in Latin and covering nearly seven hundred quarto pages, which he first published in 1921 with the title "Mysterium Fidei." I said "and much more"—such seemingly disparate topics as the nature and need of sacrifice, the reception by our Lord of His own Sacrament at the supper, the connection of Resurrection and Ascension with the Crucifixion, the meaning of His perpetual priesthood and victimhood by which He is said ever to make intercession for us in heaven, the meaning of stipends for Masses, the connection of Baptism with the Eucharist, the place which Mary our Intercessor holds in regard to the sacrifice of redemption. The penetrating light cast on these and other matters individually, and still more the synthesis of all, which was undoubtedly achieved, we consider to be the book's chief and lasting merit, and really to warrant a laudable claim to novelty. Yet the sensation which the book caused at its first appearance, and the charge of undesirable novelty which in some quarters was made against it, concerned only a part of it—that, namely, which showed the mutual relations of the last supper, the passion and the Mass to one another. This part of the book, for which the author rightly refused to admit doctrinal originality, has been summarized for English readers by de la Taille himself in "Catholic Faith in the Holy Eucharist" and in "The

Mystery of Faith and Human Reason." In fairness to the author we refrain from attempting to sum it up here in fewer words than he considered necessary, but some slight indication is given of it—as well as of his command of a language not his own—in the following passage of the last-named book (pp. 242-243):

Nor is the Mass therefore more perfect than the Supper. What the Supper still lacked, the Mass presupposes. . . . The Cross is the centre. Set up on the ridge of the sacred Mount, it divides from one another the two sides of the Eucharistic horizon: the side of Christ, looking forward to it, and the side of the Church, looking back upon it: and there it reunites in a marvellous unity the gifts of our subordinate ministry with the one offering of our one High Priest according to the order of Melchisedech. If there is but one Bread and one Chalice, the reason is because there is one Flesh that is torn, and one Blood of the covenant that cleansed the earth from its iniquities. A prerequisite or a sequel, in either way the Cross is a complement to both Mass and Supper.

There has now appeared the first volume, out of three, of a translation of the "Mysterium Fidei," entitled "The Mystery of Faith: Regarding the Most August Sacrament and Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ. Book I" (Sheed and Ward, 10s. 6d., 255 pp.). That it is a translation is announced, apart from the wrapper, only in a note following the preface, and there the industrious translator remains anonymous. His labour can only have been expended as a labour of love, and it should not be taken as a want of sympathy with him if we question the wisdom of his enterprise or criticize its execution. We think that the author would have been distinctly pleased with a translation that reproduced the original accurately—if not with equivalent literary perfection, at least with exactitude of expression in every detail. This has not been done. There is no "literature" here; the difference between the two forms of the book may be exemplified by the presence in the original, and the absence from the other, of the attractive reproductions of paintings by Van Eyck and Bouts. More serious by far is the presence of many mistakes in the translation, even in more than one passage which Fr. de la Taille, in later controversy, had requested his critics to read with the strictest exactitude. This English translation will perhaps give to its reader the complete bare bones of the author's doctrine, but we would consider it unjust if he were to be judged as a scholar and theologian from its pages. Whatever general interest the "Mysterium" may have been capable of exciting, it was not written for the general public, but for theologians, by a theologian *pur sang*. Unfortunately there is much in the translation which he did not write and would have been incapable of writing.

Here are a few examples of what we have considered blemishes serious or unseemly, in the translation: "theologicam lucem accipere" = "shed some theological light"; "doctoresque nostri" = "or the Doctors of the Church"; "exhibere illud unde nascatur aut claret . . ." = "give any indication of . . ."; "per prius" = "precisely"; "magis" = "more or less"; "Dominus Olier" = "Dom Olier"; "(Melchisedech) obtulit Abraham" "obtulit Abrahae" = "(Melchisedech) offered for Abraham." A number of proper names are wrongly reproduced, and there is a bad translation of a sentence from St. Ignatius's "Constitutiones" (rendered "Constitution"); it should read: "the closer a man shall bind himself to God and the more liberal he shall show himself to His sovereign Majesty, by so much he shall find God more liberal towards him, and be daily more fit to receive in greater abundance His graces and spiritual gifts."

W. DEMPSEY.

### "THE MONTH" FORWARDING SCHEME

It is with special gratitude that we wish to thank all those who have assisted the Forwarding Scheme during the past year. It has meant, we know very well, a real sacrifice. But never was a gift more appreciated—to judge from the letters we receive. We are asked continually for more and more copies; we should be most grateful for further subscriptions to enable us to send them.

Many missionaries write and say that **THE MONTH** is the only means they have of knowing the truth about European affairs. Particularly do French missionaries ask for it. Ashamed of their country's betrayal of its allies, they are most anxious to know what is happening to the Church they are so faithfully serving.

The war in the Far East has naturally interfered with the forwarding of several **MONTH** copies, e.g. to Japan and the Straits Settlements. As by far the great majority of the forwarded copies go to Africa or India, this has affected only a small number. It is thus still possible for the Forwarding Scheme to function, even if circumstances have been made more difficult. As long as it is at all possible, we shall continue to fulfil this work of charity for our Catholic missionaries.

To certain countries publications can be sent only directly from the publishers. The Manager of **THE MONTH** has permission to send them. Whence the added value now of a direct subscription in favour of a missionary.

Readers who are willing to forward their "Month" to a missionary or to provide an annual subscription (14s.) for one to be sent direct to the more distant outposts, are asked to communicate with The Hon. Secretary, "The Month" Forwarding Scheme, 114 Mount Street, Grosvenor Square, London, W.1. Readers must enclose a stamped addressed envelope, and all names and addresses, whether of missionaries applying for "The Month," or readers providing it, should be printed in capitals.

## II. OUR CONTEMPORARIES

**AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC WORKER:** Jan., 1942. **Australia Fights for Survival.** (Australian Catholics are convinced that their country is waging a just defensive war against the Japanese, and that an Allied victory is necessary for their continued existence as "a corporate community of Christian workers striving for a free life.")

**CATHOLIC HERALD:** March 13th, 1942. **Britain Suffers from Death.** (The report of a challenging address by Dr. Kerstens, Dutch Minister of Economic Affairs, on the peril of the falling birth-rate in Britain.)

**CATHOLIC WORKER:** March, 1942. **Democracy in Industry**, by Bernard Sullivan. (Mr. Sullivan argues that, although we have secured political democracy, we have as yet no industrial democracy in this country, and that Catholics have their part to play in securing this.)

**CLERGY REVIEW:** March, 1942. **Recent Popes and the Doctrine of the Mediation of Mary**, by Fr. Sylvester O'Brien, O.F.M. (An interesting analysis of recent Papal documents with reference to the question of our Lady's Mediation.)

**COMMON CAUSE:** March 12th, 1942. **The Problem of Austria**, by Jan Rembieliński. (A Polish writer considers the problem of Central Europe as one of conflict between the ideal of the House of Habsburg and that of the House of Jagello.)

**IRISH ECCLESIASTICAL RECORD:** March, 1942. **Youth and Youth Movements**, by R. S. Devane, S.J. (The concluding instalment of Father Devane's valuable article on Youth Movements in modern States.)

**SIGN:** Feb., 1942. **Brazil: Key to the Future**, by Ellen Collins. (Some illuminating notes on Brazil's industrial and cultural development, with the prophecy that Brazil will become the "powerhouse and industrial armature" of Southern America.)

**STELLA MARIS:** March, 1942. **Stella Maris** appears in a new guise as a Magazine for the Home and the Forces—a welcome and timely venture.

**SWORD OF THE SPIRIT PAMPHLETS:** March, 1942. **The Sword of the Spirit**, by Christopher Dawson; **The Defence of the West**, by Barbara Ward. (These are reprints, in attractive pamphlet form, of valuable articles on the Catholic attitude to the present world crisis.)

**TABLET:** March 14th, 1942. **The Recovery of Moral Order.** (An admirable short statement of the "imperative necessity to restore Europe" and "to set German unity, which is a fact, inside a larger European unity, which is to-day in part memory, in part an aspiration.")

# REVIEWS

## 1.—TIDYING THINGS UP<sup>1</sup>

A NATIONAL crisis frequently acts as a tonic to the English mind. Englishmen become conscious of problems which, ideally speaking, should have been confronted long ago; the problems are seen more adequately, the will to solve them is made stronger and more determined. Provided we can steer safely through the post-war year or two, great profit may result from this wartime thinking.

Representative members of the Church of England are devoting time and thought to various social problems—indeed, to the whole question of a social order which shall reflect, at least in part, Christian ideas and principles. These two books—each admirable, in its way—are examples of this thought on social matters.

Mr. Maurice Reckitt and the Reverend J. V. Langmead Casserley, the authors of the first volume, adopt a conservative position. But this is a conservative position which calls for some measure of revolution. They emphasize the tension that must exist within a people between those ways of life to which that people is inclined by tradition and those other ways towards which it is driven by contemporary economic necessity. "In this book therefore we shall regard the English national and cultural tradition as a reality quite as important as its contemporary system, and treat the present state of war between them as a conflict between forces of approximately equal power." The volume espouses the cause of English traditions as against the prevailing economic institutions, and its primary demand is for a new economic system in which English traditions can survive and express themselves.

And so they demand an agricultural revolution which would include a return to the land and the striking of a truer balance between rural and urban interests. Small holdings would be encouraged, though these might have to be "worked" together—to allow of large-scale agricultural methods. They desire to see the development of smaller cities, with a more genuine civic consciousness and a revival of keenness about local politics. They favour a restored guild system, would admit a certain State control of industry, and advocate the "social dividend."

The book contains some severe and timely warnings. The first of them is against birth-prevention and the falling birth-rate—one

<sup>1</sup> (1) *The Vocation of England*, by Maurice B. Reckitt and J. V. Casserley. London: Longmans, Green. Pp. 173. Price 5s. n. 1941. (2) *Christianity and Social Order*, by Dr. William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books. Pp. 90. Price, 6d. 1942.

of the sternest problems for Britain and indeed for Western Europe generally. Britain's small rise in population during the past sixty years has gone hand in hand—we are reminded—with an ominous rise in the average age of the nation. There is a tragic tendency in modern town life to exhaust human and natural fertility. A recent *Tablet* article (January 31st) emphasized the same point and argued that, if present tendencies continue unchecked, three-quarters of Europe's population will be Slav by the end of the twentieth century. There is some danger in social services, even though they be necessary. The England of which the social "reformists" like to draw a fanciful picture is not one "in which men will have been given such a sturdy economic independence that social services are no longer required, but rather one in which there will be more social services than ever." Finally, we are admonished that the mere hatred of totalitarianism and the will to do battle with its foreign manifestations will not avail to deliver us from something very like it—though more moderate and humane in general temper—here at home.

There is sound argument in the book with which we find ourselves normally in agreement. But there is the occasional Homeric nod. The authors insist, for example, that truth is a tension between two opposite points of view. This may do for politics where there is question of policy rather than of principle or fixed truth. We are told that the English habit of compromise and the striking of a mean (an excellent thing in practical administration) is at bottom "an almost instinctive dialectical sense" and the result of lasting Christian influence on the English tradition. In general the chapter on "Religion in England" seems to us the least satisfactory in the book. The idea of a Universal or Catholic Church is set aside. The Church of England is somehow to evolve from the State Church, that it is, to another form of national Church which the nation will recognize "as a divine society anterior (in nature and history) to the British State and deriving no part of its authority therefrom, and as the solely sufficient source of life-giving energy, in an earthly as well as a heavenly sense, in the national community." The authors recognize the difficulties in this supposed evolution. The Church of England must become conscious of its mission, must develop the prophetic voice, must somehow teach definite truth with definite authority. Whence the authority? And what the truth? They appear to argue that, because international institutions have proved powerless in face of strong nationalistic sentiment, the "international" Church has failed. Even could the parallel be allowed as valid, their reasoning is at fault. If a third world war is to be avoided, it is this violent nationalism that must be curbed and cooled and spiritually disarmed. It is to the "international," both in religion and in politics, that man looks for salvation.

Dr. Temple's Penguin book gives a short, straightforward, and clear statement of his outlook on social reconstruction. He begins with an amusing incident, that reveals the odd attitude of the lay mind, the belief that the Church can have nothing to do with public matters. "When a group of Bishops attempted to bring Government, Coal-owners and Miners together in a solution of the disastrous Coal Strike of 1926, Mr. Baldwin, then Prime Minister, asked how the Bishops would like it if he referred to the Iron and Steel Federation the revision of the Athanasian Creed." Dr. Temple rightly insists that Christian teachers have the duty to speak on public and social affairs. It is not their province to advocate this or the other solution of any problem which demands technical understanding, but they have principles to emphasize, and they should be ready to criticize and condemn what offends against justice and the people's welfare.

He would not, however, bring Christians into the political arena in any Christian party. His answer to the question "How should the Church interfere?" is as follows: "In three ways—(1) its members must fulfil their moral responsibilities and functions in a Christian spirit; (2) its members must exercise their purely civic rights in a Christian spirit; (3) it must itself supply them with a systematic statement of principles to aid them in doing these two things, and this will carry with it a denunciation of customs or institutions in contemporary life and practice which offend against those principles."

Dr. Temple stresses the fundamental fact that all social thinking begins, not with man, but with God, and must be established upon an appreciation of man's personal dignity and destiny as God's creature. He then discusses what he terms the *derivative* Christian social principles—Freedom, Social Fellowship, and Service. Unfortunately he rounds off the section on "Freedom" with an unworthy gibe at the Catholic Church, which he accuses of blindness to Christ's respect "for the freedom of personal choice." It is possible to stress freedom at the expense of authority and truth, and Dr. Temple does not escape this error.

Actually he pays considerable tribute to the Catholic Church's influence on public and social life—before the Reformation. This appears not so much positively as in the sad admission that such influence has been rarely exercised since. "The Reformers repudiated large parts of the (common Christian) tradition in the desire to return from ecclesiastical to Biblical authority; but in fact their position was in this respect less fully Biblical than that of the medieval Church" (p. 29); Calvin "unwittingly opened the way for the coming of Economic Man" (p. 32); the Reformers never intended to produce such a monster as the Economic Man of the last hundred and fifty years . . . but "their fundamental individualism, which brought a fuller sense of personal responsibility

to God, also at the same time undermined the appreciation of wealth as essentially social and therefore subject at all points to control in the interest of society as a whole" (p. 33).

There is a curious small error on p. 48, where Dr. Temple refers to the "distinguished French Jesuit, Jacques Maritain." M. Maritain is both French and distinguished, but he is no Jesuit. One might imagine a parallel passage in a volume of the Archbishop of Paris paying gracious tribute to the distinguished English Jesuit, Père Christopher Dawson.

J. M.

## 2—THE PROBLEM OF EVIL<sup>1</sup>

THE knowledge of God which is possible for us in this life must always be inadequate because He is not now the direct object of our intellect. Such, therefore, must also be our understanding of His ways with the world—"past finding out," as St. Paul says of them—so that the question of *why* God does this or that might seem to be useless, indeed meaningless. Yet to know Him, Our Lord has told us, is "eternal life" in the sense not only of our final end, but also of our journey to that end. And since we believe that in the Incarnation the infinite fulness of the Godhead has for our sakes uttered Himself *bodily*—within the scope, that is, of our finite comprehension—we realize that we are not only entitled but obliged to use our intellect as far as it will take us towards an ever clearer understanding of Him.

In the book at present under review Dom Bruno Webb asks the question, so pertinent to-day, of why God permits the evil of every kind which we find to be universal in all creation. He quotes the dilemma of Epicurus, "Omnipotence could, Benevolence would have prevented evil," and he answers it, not, of course, with any hope of affording such an exhaustive solution as will altogether silence all possible objections, but justifiably with the aim of assisting our faith by enlisting reason upon its side. He dismisses the definition of evil as an inherent quality of finite existence—the *ἀνάγκη* of Greek philosophy—for that seems to set a limit upon omnipotence, and with St. Augustine he finds it quite simply and unequivocally in the fact of Sin. Not that all evil is the direct result of individual sin, but that through sin (and in particular through the sin of the Angels) something has gone wrong with the scheme entrusted by God for development to the free will of man. God has placed at man's disposal all the ingredients of goodness and well-being and happiness, and man has mishandled and still mishandles them. The designed harmony has been disturbed, and evil, which is not a simple negation of good but a positive

<sup>1</sup> *Why does God permit Evil?*, by Dom Bruno Webb, O.S.B. London: Burns and Oates. Pp. 128. Price 2s. n. (paper); 3s. 6d. n. (cloth). 1941.

defect of right order, is the consequence. Why does not God intervene to set it all right again? Because evil is and continues to be the effect of free will, and it would be contrary to divine wisdom first to bestow this inestimable gift upon human nature and then to override it.

Proceeding then on the theme of St. Augustine's, "God judged it better to bring good out of evil rather than to suffer no evil to exist," he shows with great cogency how in fact from the sufferings of man, and indeed of all creatures, good perhaps otherwise unattainable, either in kind or in degree, inevitably issues. Crowning all is the Passion of Christ—was that good or evil? And because of the Church's doctrine of our mystical incorporation with Christ, we may say now that the pain—the suffering, the frustration, the *evil*—of all the world is the Passion of Christ: "I saw," says Mother Julian, "I saw a great one-ing betwixt Christ and us, for when He was in pain we were in pain." The paradox of the "Exultet," *O felix culpa! O certe necessarium Adae peccatum!* expresses the mind of the Church on this thrilling mystery. This is a most admirable little book, and none the less so because in the course of its handling of the main problem it treats of many other interesting collateral ones.

R. H. J. S.

### 3—THE BLACK BOOK OF POLAND<sup>1</sup>

THIS is a terrible book—frightful and frightening. And yet it is a sober, well-authenticated record of atrocities committed by the Germans in Poland. The record dates from September 1939 to the end of June 1941—that period when the Germans were in occupation of Western Poland while the Soviets controlled Poland's more easterly provinces.

If the book were a straightforward story of murder, robbery, and rape, of confiscation and concentration camps, it would be terrible enough in all conscience. What lends additional horror to this account is the evident planning—scientific and cold-blooded—of the whole sickening business. A ruthless attempt is being made to stamp out the vitality and culture of an entire people. Schools and universities have been closed and pillaged; the educated leaders are dead or deported; hundreds of thousands are enslaved in "forced labour" for the Reich. Dr. Frank, Poland's brutal governor, has often and openly declared that the Polish people is to be degraded to a *Sklavenvolk*; they are to be the Germans' helots.

The book deals in considerable detail with the Nazi persecution of the Catholic Church in Poland. Here the details are given on the authority of Cardinal Hlond, the Polish Primate. Many provinces are left with scarcely any priests to serve their spiritual

<sup>1</sup> *The German New Order in Poland*. London: Hutchinson. Pp. xiv, 588. Price, 10s. 6d. n. 1942.

needs. Nothing perhaps proves this so conclusively as the permission recently given by the Pope for Polish laymen to carry and administer the Blessed Sacrament. We are back to the days of Saint Tarcisius; only this time the martyred saints are Poles, not Romans.

A terrible book—but a book that should be readily available. The “New Order”—yes, of an Attila or a Genghis Khan, and all the fouler for its control of scientific methods. We need the reminder that such things have happened and are happening to-day, first of all, to awaken our intense sympathy and prayer for their so numerous victims; in the second place, because here, if anywhere, there must be expiation and reparation; and, finally, that we may preserve a touch of realism in these Vansittart and anti-Vansittart controversies. Wherever you may look for the “good German,” you will not discover him in German-occupied Poland.

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### SHORT NOTICES

#### BIOGRAPHICAL

Fr. Aloysius Roche has called his latest publication *A Bedside Book of Irish Saints* (B. O. & W.: 5s. n.), but it could quite as well be called a deskside one, or a bathside one, or the sort of book one can prop up against the sugar-bowl at breakfast. Pleasant common sense is the key-note of all Fr. Roche’s books, and he has found no more suitable material on which to exercise it than the lives of the Irish Saints from the fifth century to the ninth. As the author takes us about the four centuries and comments on a variety of saints from a dozen different angles, the effect can only be described as a sparkling stream rambling through a homely and attractive countryside. Celtic asceticism though stark to modern eyes was undeniably productive. When we say “the lives of the Irish Saints” the operative word is “lives.” They *lived*. Through the haze of legends which veils many of them from us, one thing at least stands out—their strong, sometimes massive, originality and enterprise. At one of the dullest periods of European history, with the rest of Europe in a cultural backwater, St. Brigit was running her technical college; St. Columba, soldier, exile, poet, scion of the Royal House, was influencing the north of Britain with his culture no less than with his faith; St. Columbanus, the finished scholar, was fighting the barbarian paganism of Burgundy and North Italy itself; St. Gall was composing the first German dictionary and devising new German words, Irish monks were describing their travels to the Danube, to the Red Sea, to Iceland, producing magnificent manuscripts, composing exquisite lyrics. This is certainly a book to have at one’s elbow. The flaws are negligible, consisting chiefly of some half-dozen misprints.

## ASCETICAL

In **St. John of the Cross, Doctor of Divine Love** (Thomas Baker, 5s. 6d. n.), Father Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen sets himself the difficult task of providing a brief but comprehensive account of the mystical teaching of the great Carmelite saint and doctor. The honour the Church has recently conferred on St. John in declaring him a doctor is not only an outstanding mark of her approval of his mystical teaching, but a sign that she desires it to be widely known and used. Two things have hindered this—to some extent—in the past. There has been a tendency to over-emphasize its negative aspect at the expense of the positive. The way of self-annihilation, so vividly described by the saint, is unduly alarming unless it is seen in relation to the love that inspires it and the new life to which it leads. A more fundamental difficulty is that owing to the saint's literary method (his four great works interpenetrate in a manner which is apt to confuse anyone but an expert), the unity, balance, and logical development of his doctrine are frequently lost. Father Gabriel's treatment is admirably designed to overcome these difficulties. His wide knowledge of St. John's writings and of the literature and tradition associated with them enables him to pick out the salient features with a sure hand and to present the great outlines of St. John's system in their true perspective. He omits controversial issues and personal theories in favour of the accepted and traditional interpretation—with the result that his work is a simple and valuable introduction to the saint's works. At the same time the clarity of his synthesis will prove enlightening to many who are already familiar with these religious masterpieces. The translator, a Benedictine of Stanbrook Abbey, is to be congratulated on a sound and accurate piece of work.

## FICTION

Readers who enjoyed Lady Carbery's "The Farm by Lough Gur" will find in Maura Laverty's **Never No More** (Longmans, Green, 10s. 6d. n.) a worthy rival. The stage is set in a small town in the Bog of Allan, and the central figure is the writer's grandmother, as seen through the eyes and expressed in the words of a growing schoolgirl. Round the character and action of "Gran," a beautiful piece of portrait painting of a wise, bighearted, and brave Catholic—of the old school (?)—revolve the tragedy, comedy, and romance which are there for those who have eyes to see. With remarkable skill the writer tells her story as an intelligent and loving grandchild might, with pardonable lapses, due to revision or supervision, of a more sophisticated idiom and an occasional failure to live up to the obvious grasp of the fact that tragedy is a matter of the soul. Whether, as her introducer thinks, Miss Laverty has fame and fortune for the asking, only time can tell, but she has made

a good start. Perhaps readers, in these rationed times, should be warned that Gran's cooking and recipes will make their mouths water. And no one should miss the wisdom, tact, and wholesomeness of Gran's explanation of the "facts of life" to a growing girl.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

(Reviewed in present issue or reserved for future notice)

## THOMAS BAKER, London.

*St. John of the Cross*. By Father Gabriel, O.D.C. Pp. 121. Price, 5s. 6d. n.

## BURNS and OATES, London.

*Follow Me*. By Bernard Fennelly, C.S.Sp. Pp. xviii, 203. Price, 6s. n. *A Bedside Book of Irish Saints*. By Rev. Aloysius Roche. Pp. xii, 183. Price, 5s. n. *The Rosary in Daily Life*. By Bruno Walkley, O.P. Pp. xi, 82. Price, 2s. 6d. n. *In Soft Garments*. By Mgr. Ronald Knox. Pp. vii, 188. Price, 6s. n. *The Rite of High Mass and Sung Mass*. By Rev. J. O'Connell. Pp. v, 243. Price, 15s. n.

## EDICOES S.P.N., Lisbon.

*Jodo De Brito*. By João Ameal. Pp. 95.

## H. M. GILL and SON, Dublin.

*Roger Boscovich, S.J.* By H. V. Gill, S.J. Pp. xviii, 76. Price, 7s. 6d. n. *The House of Peace*. By M. F. Egan, S.J. Pp. 125. Price, 2s. 6d. n. *A Second Twelve Hours*. By Rev. Denis O'Shea, C.C. Pp. viii, 85. Price, 1s. n.

## GOLLANZ, London.

*The Red Bible*. By Sidney Dark. Pp. 142. Price, 5s. n.

## HUTCHINSON, London.

*The German New Order in Poland*. Pp. xiv, 586. Price, 10s. 6d. n.

## IMPRIMERIE POPULAIRE, Montreal.

*Le Troisième Centenaire de Saint-Sulpice*. Pp. 200.

## KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRUBNER and Co., London.

*The History of the Popes: vols. xxxiii-xxxiv*. By Ludwig von Pastor. Translated by Dom Ernest Graf, O.S.B. Pp. xxxv, 554, and xiii, 596. Price 16s. 6d. n. (each).

## LONGMANS, GREEN, London.

*Seeking for Trouble*. By Margaret T. Monroe. Pp. vii, 216. Price, 5s. n. *Lessons of the Prince of Peace*. By Rev. C. E. Raven, D.D. Pp. 95. *The Vocation of England*. By Maurice B. Reckitt and J. V. Langmead Casserley. Pp. 173. Price, 5s. n. *Between God and Man*. By John Hadham. Pp. vii, 104. Price, 3s. 6d. n.

## LORAS COLLEGE PRESS, Dubuque.

*In the Steps of Dante, and other Papers*. By I. J. Semper. Pp. 160. Price, \$1.25.

## OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, London.

*Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs*: (52) *Britain's Food in Wartime*. By Sir John Russell. (53) *The Arsenal of Democracy*. By A. J. Brown. Pp. 32. Price, 4d. (each).

## SANDS, London.

*Amber Eyes*. By Joseph Meaney. Pp. ix, 101. Price, 3s. 6d. n. *To Morrow*. By M. Winter Were. Pp. 40. Price, 2s. n. *Prayer for All Men*. By Pierre Charles, S.J. Pp. 143. Price, 5s. n. *Prayer with Mary*. By Rev. J. Leo McGovern. Pp. 136. Price, 4s. 6d. n. *Angel's Mirror*. By a Dominican Sister. Pp. 95. Price, 5s. n.

## SHEED and WARD, London.

*Our Lady of Wisdom*. By Maurice Zundel. Translated by F. J. Sheed. Pp. xii, 103. Price, 5s. n. *The Successful Error*. By Rudolf Allers. Pp. ix, 266. Price, 10s. 6d. n. *The Mystery of Faith: Bk. I. The Sacrifice of Our Lord*. By Maurice de la Taille, S.J. Pp. xviii, 255. Price, 10s. 6d. n. *The Borgia Pope: Alexander VI*. By Orestes Ferrara. Translated by F. J. Sheed. Pp. vi, 455. Price, 16s. n.